

**Moderates and Extremists in the
Indian Nationalist Movement, 1883-1920**

MODERATES AND EXTREMISTS IN
THE INDIAN NATIONALIST MOVEMENT
1883-1920

*With Special Reference to
Surendranath Banerjea and Lajpat Rai*

by
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ASIA PUBLISHING HOUSE
NEW YORK

Daniel Argov (1934-)

104-13
A26 W

PRINTED IN INDIA

BY G. G. PATHARE AT THE POPULAR PRESS (BOM.)
PRIVATE LTD., BOMBAY 34 WB. AND PUBLISHED BY
P. S. JAYASINGHE, ASIA PUBLISHING HOUSE, 29 EAST
10TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10003

*To my wife
with Love*

17237

FOREWORD

THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT in India has been distinguished from almost every other search for independence and national identity by the quality of the intellectual debate which went on among the political leaders, from the founding fathers of the National Congress to the architects of independence. This was no crude demand for the ending of foreign rule and the elevation of self-chosen leaders into absolute authority, such as we have seen in other emergent countries. This was a genuine dialectical argument about the nature of freedom, the character of nationhood, the obligations of individuals to society. This debate was carried on for more than fifty years, until at last independence was achieved; the first great experiment in freedom, from which all others have followed. The cares and responsibilities of the greatest experiment in democracy ever attempted in this world seem to have rather fully absorbed the energies of the present generation of Indian political leaders. Apart from a few solitary thinkers, such as Jayaprakash Narayan and Rajaji, we do not find the same deeply-felt inquiries into political truths. Dr. Argov's re-examination of the debate between the so-called Moderates and Extremists of yesterday will have many lessons for the political practitioners and the political philosophers of today and tomorrow. He has chosen to pay most attention to two men who have been somewhat overlooked in recent years. Surendranath Banerjea is often regarded as "The Lost Leader" Robert Browning wrote about:

Just for a handful of silver he left us,
Just for a riband to stick in his coat.

Dr. Argov brings out Banerjea's lasting qualities; his long search for a middle way in politics, his vision of an association between India and Britain which would open up a way of international partnership. The role of Lala Lajpat Rai has also been obscured: Dr. Argov reminds us that, in many ways, Lajpat Rai was a trail-blazer. He realized that political action and expression in India would broaden out from mainly middle class activities into prole-

tarian politics. India today is having to adjust to a new situation in which the under-privileged, the underdogs of the ages, are discovering that they can wrest power from those who have been accustomed to authority. Some of the consequences, which are only now being realized, were anticipated thirty or forty years ago by Lala Lajpat Rai.

Daniel Argov has a particularly perceptive understanding of Indian nationalism. It is excellent that somebody who belongs to a small yet ancient nation, in the meeting-ground between East and West, should have given his life to Indian studies. He is able to see aspects of Indian political thought which would be closed to an Englishman or an American. This book opens up an important area of Indian political thought and brings it to vivid life.

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INTRODUCTION

SINCE India's independence, broadly two main perspectives are discernible in research works in modern Indian history. The first depicts the period between the middle of the nineteenth century to the thirties of the twentieth century as if it were mainly the history of the British Government of India. In other words, British rule is analyzed through problems of administration, revenue policy, education, external policy etc., or, through a more detailed investigation of one or more of these problems within a set period, confined and stamped by a term of office of one of the Viceroys. In this perspective the Indian nationalist movement receives marginal attention, and it is measured by the degree to which it hampered Government activity, or how effectively it weakened British rule. The second approach is an Indian appraisal of British rule in which the Indian nationalist movement is viewed with a magnifying glass in an effort to idolize India's Freedom Fighters who struggled to achieve India's independence. This work conforms with neither of these two perspectives. It is a critical assessment which seeks to represent an objective and balanced analysis, endeavouring to portray the Indian nationalist movement from within. Today, British rule in India should be viewed as yet another chapter in the long history of foreign domination of India. Hence its significance lies less in how it began and how it ended, and more in the manner in which it introduced Western political ideas into India and in the response or reaction of Indians to these ideas. In particular, those Western political institutions which still endure in independent India, above all, parliamentary democracy. Hence the emphasis in this work is placed on the process by which Indians solicited or demanded increasing representation in the government of their country. A process which developed during the period 1883-1920, which embodied the basic elements that were further developed by Gandhi, and which still continue in present day India. The very length of the process enabled British rule to bequeath parliamentary democracy, while the prolonged struggle of the Indian nationalist movement, within itself and against British rule, gave Indians the experience which fostered

the adoption of parliamentary democracy.

It is for this reason that the early stages of the process and its gradual development are discussed in detail. At the same time this book emphasizes the ideological differences between the moderates and the extremists and illustrates the distinction between the Indian National Congress and the Indian nationalist movement, which were hitherto regarded as identical. It seeks to prove that until 1917 the Congress, controlled by the moderates, was not the vanguard of the nationalist movement. Moreover, that the Congress impeded the growth of the nationalist movement. In other words, it attempts to show that the nationalist movement developed slowly because it did not receive the support of the Congress until the extremists gained control of the Congress and transformed it into the spearhead of the nationalist movement.

The Ilbert Bill controversy and the Anglo-Indian Defence Association gave impetus to the National Fund in Bengal, which culminated in December 1883 in the National Conference, and in December 1885 in the establishment of the Indian National Congress.

During its early years, the main struggle of the Congress was a struggle for recognition by the Government. The Congress endeavoured to present an image of respectability and loyalty, and its watchwords were moderation and caution. An exclusive body of English-educated Indians, whose principal desire was to assimilate Western political institutions, the Congress kept aloof from the masses.

The Congress directed its main effort towards England and pinned its hopes on the Liberal party. It justified its requests for Indian representation in the British Government of India on the basis of England's pledges to India. The concept of England's pledges, built upon declarations of Thomas Munro, Macaulay, Henry Lawrence, and above all upon Queen Victoria's Proclamation, was enhanced by Ripon's pro-Indian policy; yet, from the end of Ripon's Viceroyalty to 20 August 1917, successive viceroys and secretaries of state for India emphatically repudiated the feasibility of introducing English political institutions in India. "A time may conceivably come . . . to leave India to herself but for the present it is necessary to govern her as if we were to

govern her for ever"¹—proved to be the consummation of England's pledges and their delayed fulfilment.

The growth of the extremist party in India was explained by Bipin Chandra Pal as follows: "Lord Ripon was a kind Viceroy but one who acted as a baby-comforter and we had been brought up for too long a period upon political lollipops; Lord Curzon threw the baby-comforter away and thus made us feel our hunger for Swaraj."² At the same time it was the failure of the moderates to gain reforms by persuasion that resulted in the extremists' determination to force the Government to yield power by coercion.

Both the moderates and the extremists came from the middle class, both were reacting to British rule, and both voiced Indian grievances. The moderates claimed social equality and a share in the British Government of India on the grounds that they were British subjects; the extremists demanded social equality and political emancipation as their birthright. The moderates appealed to Englishmen in England and placed their reliance on English history and English political ideas; the extremists drew sustenance from India's heritage and appealed to Indians by invoking religious patriotism. The moderates emphasized the need for political apprenticeship under the providential guidance of British rule; the extremists rejected the idea of England's providential mission in India as an illusion. They disparaged the constitutional agitation of the moderates as "mendicancy", and their stress on apprenticeship as an acceptance of unending political servitude. Instead, they called for self-reliance and self-apprenticeship through Swadeshi, Boycott and Passive-Resistance. In contrast, the moderates stressed that their constitutional agitation was practical statesmanship, that emotional idealism was fraught with peril, that rashness was not courage, that British rule would not come to an end because of Boycott, and above all that the removal of British rule would result in chaos and anarchy.

The present tendency to depict the early history of the Indian National Congress as "The History of the Freedom Movement" ignores the fact that the moderate leaders of the Congress constantly harped on the theme of securing the permanence of British

¹ Sir John Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, London 1883, pp. 193-194.

² B. C. Pal, *Speeches at Madras*, Ganesh, Madras 1907, p. 6.

rule in India. For Banerjea, Swaraj meant self-restraint;³ while Sinha and Gokhale frankly said that if the British were to leave India, Indians would call them back before they reached Aden.⁴

The moderates reconciled loyalty to England with Indian patriotism, believing that the two were necessarily compatible and complementary. For the extremists, Indian patriotism and loyalty to British rule were two diametrically opposed entities. The moderates tenaciously sought gradual reform and could see no half-way-house between order and revolution. The extremists held that revolution was but rapid evolution, and that peace and order under British rule amounted to national stagnation. The moderates used English political ideas as their weapons for arguments and petitions. They employed speech and pen in their appeals for concessions and abhorred the use of the sword. The extremists bolstered up India's past and advocated militant struggle, not debate. The moderates sought Hindu-Muslim unity, and maintained a secular view of politics; the extremists fostered Hindu pride and thus antagonized the Muslims. The moderates solicited constitutional reforms on the basis that the British Government of India was not an alien government but an administration that could transform itself through gradual stages into an Indian national government. The extremists regarded the British Government of India as a system of despotic alien rule. The moderates aspired to attain Indian self-government within the British Empire. The extremists regarded the British Empire as imperialism based on capitalism, and strove to free India from British rule.

Thus the differences between the moderates and the extremists were not confined to different methods of agitation, but were fundamental differences in aim and methods. This book seeks to outline the change in India's reaction to British rule from the period when the British Government of India was regarded as a providential government ordained to fulfil a mission, to the time when it was viewed as a Satanic government.

With the exception of S. A. Wolpert, *Tilak and Gokhale* (Uni-

³ Surendranath Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, Oxford University Press, 1925, p. 125.

⁴ Sinha to Lady Minto, Mary Countess of Minto, *India: Minto and Morley*, London 1934, p. 298. Gokhale to Lord Hardinge, Lord Hardinge, *My Indian Years*, London 1948, p. 115.

versity of California, 1962), standard works on the Indian national movement (i.e. H. C. E. Zacharias, *Renascent India from Ram Mohan Roy to Mohandas Gandhi*, London 1933, or Andrews and Mukerji, *The Rise and Growth of the Congress in India*, 1938, or C. Y. Chintamani, *Indian Politics since the Mutiny*, London 1940), provide a general history of the Indian National Congress without sufficiently emphasizing the mental conflict between the moderates and the extremists. S. A. Wolpert's comparative study of Tilak and Gokhale portrays the role of the two best known representatives of the moderates and the extremists, yet it might lead the unsuspecting reader to draw the conclusion that the two Maharashtrian leaders were the only ones, or that Maharashtra alone exemplified the history of the Indian national movement. While there are political biographies of Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Aurobindo Ghosh, and numerous studies of Tilak, no full study has been written on Surendranath Banerjea, while Lajpat Rai has been virtually neglected. Thus the choice of contrasting Surendranath Banerjea with Lajpat Rai has been made in order to present a comprehensive study of Surendranath Banerjea, and to fill in the gap on Lajpat Rai. Surendranath Banerjea was typical of the moderates in the Indian National Congress while Lajpat Rai typified the extremists. This book seeks to portray critical political biographies of Surendranath Banerjea and Lajpat Rai within a general comparative study of the moderates and the extremists, in an analysis of political beliefs and modes of political action in the Indian nationalist movement, 1883-1920. It attempts to mirror the attitude of mind of the two nationalist leaders against their respective backgrounds of thought and experience, hence events in Bengal and the Punjab loom larger than in other parts of India.

When Gandhi led the Non-Co-operation movement, Banerjea became an anachronism and was charged with national treason, hence his personality does not appeal to Indian historians of the freedom movement. At the same time, Banerjea's autobiography, *A Nation in Making*, is regarded as an adequate exposition of his political career, and therefore kept off others from an analysis of his character and ideas; yet since the main purpose of Banerjea's autobiography was to vindicate himself against the charge that he became a traitor, it is mainly one-sided. The present work

supplements Banerjea's autobiography with his speeches and his newspaper, the *Bengalee*, as well as with views of his contemporaries, and seeks to present an impartial critical assessment.

Lajpat Rai has been hitherto virtually ignored mainly because Tilak appeals to historians as the main exponent of the extremists.

Yet, for all the image of Tilak as the leader of the extremists, during the latter part of his life Tilak moderated his views, while the most distinguished feature of Lajpat Rai is his far-sightedness.

This work attempts to piece together the scattered articles, speeches and writings of Lajpat Rai into a cohesive narrative.

It is based on the writings and speeches of the moderates and extremists, through which they speak for themselves. Official records and reports include extracts from the newly opened Curzon papers. The Reports of the Indian National Congress, newspapers and periodicals, biographies and recollections, have been extensively used.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The book developed from a thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of London in 1964. I express my deep gratitude to the friends of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in London, particularly to its go-ahead Secretary, Dr. Walter Zander, for a scholarship and constant encouragement which enabled me to pursue my studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

Professor Hugh Tinker supervised my research and guided the progress of the thesis until its completion. I express heartfelt thanks and appreciation for his help, constructive criticism, and constant trust.

I also express sincere gratitude to Professor A. L. Basham. I am indebted to Mr. V. C. Joshi, former Assistant Director, National Archives of India, who enabled me to use Lajpat Rai's writings when they were yet unpublished.

I thank Dr. S. R. Mehrotra and Dr. D. Dalton and express special thanks to Dr. L. Caplan.

The librarians and staff of the India Office Library, the British Museum, the Senate House of the University of London, and the School of Oriental and African Studies have been most helpful and I thank them all. Above all I thank my wife.

D. A.

ABBREVIATIONS*

B.N.N.R. — Bengal Native Newspaper Reports.

EUR. MSS. — European Manuscripts.

I.N.C. — Indian National Congress.

I.O.L. — India Office Library.

P.N.N.R. — Punjab Native Newspaper Reports.

* To facilitate reading of footnotes.

CONTENTS

<i>Foreword by Hugh Tinker</i>	vii
<i>Introduction</i>	ix
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xvi
CHAPTER I The Early Career of Surendranath Banerjea, the National Fund and the National Conference 1871-1885	1
CHAPTER II The Character and Ideas of the Indian National Congress 1885-1895	30
CHAPTER III The Early Career of Lajpat Rai and the Emergence of a Rift in the Congress 1882-1902	59
CHAPTER IV The Ideas of the Extremists and the Surat Split 1900-1907	95
CHAPTER V The Congress Adrift, and Captured by the Extremists 1908-1920	137
<i>Epilogue and Conclusion</i>	169
<i>Appendix I: Select Resolutions of the Indian National Congress, 1885, 1905, 1908, 1920</i>	179
<i>Appendix II: Constitution of the Indian National Congress: 1908, 1920</i>	205
<i>Bibliography</i>	233
<i>Glossary</i>	239
<i>Index</i>	240

CHAPTER I

THE EARLY CAREER OF SURENDRANATH BANERJEA, THE NATIONAL FUND AND THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE, 1871-1885

✓ "It is impossible to imagine the Nationalist Movement in India without Mr. Banerjea."¹ Surendranath Banerjea was born in 1848. He received his early education at Doveton College — an institution which was mainly restricted to Anglo-Indians²—where he was taught English and Latin literature by his English teachers. Surendranath's father was influenced by the teaching of David Hare and by the ideas of Henry Derozio. He became a successful medical practitioner in Calcutta and whole-heartedly accepted Western ideals and modes of behaviour. At the same time Surendranath belonged to a Kulin Brahman family in which his grandfather maintained strict observance of Hindu orthodoxy.³

Thus Banerjea's later marked Anglophilism is to be traced to his school days at Doveton College and to his father's Westernization; but throughout his career he proudly stressed his Kulin Brahmanism.

These two forces moulded Banerjea's character. He claimed that he grew up within the framework of these different trends without being affected by their potential incompatibility. While Jawaharlal Nehru described himself as "a queer mixture of the East and the West, out of place everywhere, at home nowhere",⁴ Banerjea vindicated Macaulay's prediction that as a result of Western influence, English-educated Indians would become "Indians in blood and colour but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect."⁵

Having graduated from Doveton College, Banerjea was sent

¹ *The Indian Nation Builders*, Madras 1921, 7th edition, p. 56.

² Throughout this work the term Anglo-Indian(s) is used to denote Englishmen resident in India.

³ Surendranath Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, Oxford University Press, London, 1925, p. 2.

⁴ Jawaharlal Nehru, *Autobiography*, London, 1942, p. 353.

⁵ Macaulay's Minute on Education, 2 February 1835.

to England in March 1868 to compete in the examinations for the Indian Civil Service. He passed the examinations successfully, returned to Calcutta in 1871, and was posted to Sylhet in Assam where he was appointed Assistant Magistrate. Two years later Banerjea was dismissed from the Indian Civil Service. He was charged with lack of accuracy in supplementing written records bearing later dates to correspond retrospectively with oral judgements and with deliberate intent to conceal the fault.⁶ He was found guilty of "gross carelessness and dishonesty" in discharging his judicial duties.⁷

He returned to London in April 1874 to appeal against his dismissal but was informed that the decision could not be rescinded. His attempt to be called to the Bar, for which he fulfilled the required conditions, met with equal failure as an outcome of his dismissal from the Indian Civil Service.

Banerjea's expulsion from the Civil Service proved to be the decisive turning point in his career. He described his position in the following words: "The whole of my official prospects were blasted. . . . From the Civil Service I had been dismissed. From the Bar I was shut out. Thus were closed to me all avenues to the realization of an honourable ambition. . . . I felt that I had suffered because I was an Indian, a member of a community that lay disorganized, had no public opinion, and no voice in the counsels of their Government. I felt with all the passionate warmth of youth that we were helots, hewers of wood and drawers of water in the land of our birth."⁸ He returned to Calcutta in June 1875, and "began at once to take part in public affairs."⁹

Banerjea's education in Doveton College and in London, his admiration for British institutions, and his religious inclination towards Christian ideals,¹⁰ give reason to assume that had he remained in the Indian Civil Service he would have been a most loyal I.C.S. man.¹¹ His subsequent official career in the Imperial

⁶ Home Prog. Public, September 1873, pp. 2089-2149.

⁷ Home Prog. Public, December 1873, No. 6443. See also Banerjea's exposition. *In Re Surendranath Banerjea*, Calcutta, 1873, and *A Nation in Making*, pp. 28-29.

⁸ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, pp. 31-33. ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

¹⁰ Banerjea's association with the Brahmo Samaj is discussed below in Chapter III.

¹¹ See below, *Indian Mirror*, 8 February 1883.

Legislative Council in 1913, his appointment as Minister of Local Self-Government and his knighthood in 1921, prove the feasibility of this assumption. Seen from this viewpoint, Banerjea's role as a public agitator was a roundabout way of agitating for his personal rehabilitation into Government service. He was forced against his own plans to channel his career through "public affairs", and he sought to re-enter the very Government which he was obliged to criticize in his role as a public agitator. Throughout his career as a public agitator Banerjea was fundamentally projecting his own personal grievances from the public platform.

(In 1876 Banerjea set upon the task of stirring political interest among Bengali students. He lectured on "Mazzini", on "The Study of Indian History", "England and India", and on "Indian Unity".¹² His recurrent theme in these lectures stressed Indians' loyalty and gratitude to British rule side by side with a rallying cry for Indian patriotism and unity. Although he discarded Mazzini's revolutionary doctrine, he projected "Young Italy" as an inspiring example for a self-reliant united India.¹³ He urged the formation of political associations modelled on the Catholic Association of Daniel O'Connell, and mooted the idea of establishing an annual meeting of leading representatives from different provinces of India to foster Indian national unity.¹⁴ A testimony to the effect of these lectures is provided by Bipin Chandra Pal who noted that he and his fellow students were greatly inspired by Banerjea's oratory, formed secret societies, and took "secret vows of service and devotion to the motherland."¹⁵ Similarly, Lajpat Rai as a student was "deeply moved" by reading Banerjea's speeches, particularly on Mazzini.

(Having established himself as a reputable political speaker, Banerjea "began seriously to consider the advisability of forming an Association to represent the views of the educated middle class community and inspire them with a living interest in public affairs."¹⁶)

¹² *Speeches of Babu Surendranath Banerjea*, ed. R. C. Palit, Vol. I (henceforth *Speeches*).

¹³ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 21, April 1876. ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 20.

¹⁵ B. C. Pal, *Memories of My Life and Times*, Calcutta, 1932, p. 247.

¹⁶ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 40.

On 26 July 1876, an important public meeting was held at the Albert Hall, Calcutta, which led to the establishment of the Indian Association. Banerjea was the principal organizer of the meeting and was placed first on the list of the Association's executive committee. Other members of the committee included lawyers, journalists, medical men, and litterateurs. The Indian Association set as its objective "to represent the people, to form a healthy public opinion, and to promote by every legitimate means the political, intellectual and material advancement of the people."¹⁷ The most important issue on which the Indian Association deliberated was the India Office regulation of 24 February 1876 which lowered the maximum age limit from 21 to 19 for candidates to the competitive examinations for the Indian Civil Service.¹⁸ The regulation was regarded by the members of the Indian Association as a deliberate act which aimed to reduce the chances of Indian infiltration into the Civil Service, and it was this issue which prompted the foundation of the Indian Association. On 24 March 1877, the Indian Association resolved to send a petition to Parliament to raise the maximum age limit to twenty-two and to hold the competitive examinations simultaneously in London and in India.¹⁹

Banerjea who throughout his life never ceased to smart under the circumstances of his own dismissal from the Civil Service was naturally among the leading organizers of the meeting and was appointed "Special Delegate" to organize similar protest meetings in Northern India. During May to November 1877, he visited Delhi, Agra, Lucknow, Kanpur, Allahabad, Lahore, Amritsar, Meerut, Surat, Poona, Bombay and Madras. He organized public meetings which adopted the Indian Association's resolution, promoted the appointment of local committees to collect signatures for the petition to Parliament, and helped to form branches of the Indian Association in Lahore and Allahabad.²⁰

Banerjea's tour was the first attempt of its kind to unite English-

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁸ See, Hira Lal Singh, *Problems and Policies of the British in India*, London, 1963, p. 26.

¹⁹ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 44; and J. C. Bagal, *History of the Indian Association*, Calcutta, 1953, p. 19.

²⁰ J. C. Bagal, *History of the Indian Association*, pp. 22-31 and Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, pp. 45-50.

educated Indians from different provinces on a common political issue. Significantly, three portentous characteristics emerged from the early activity of the Indian Association: firstly, it restricted its agitation to "legitimate means"; secondly, it directed its agitation to Parliament in Westminster and by-passed the Government of India; thirdly, it resolved to raise a fund for the purpose of establishing a permanent deputation in England "to place before the British public the views, sentiments, and aspirations" of Indians.²¹ These were to form the axioms of the yet unborn Indian National Congress.)

(On 1 January 1879, Banerjea became the proprietor and editor of the *Bengalee*. He had previous experience in journalism as an occasional reporter of the *Hindoo Patriot*—the organ of the British Indian Association which represented the views of the zamindars. Under Banerjea's editorship the *Bengalee* became the semi-official newspaper of the Indian Association.²² Journalism enhanced Banerjea's reputation as a public figure. His editorials in the *Bengalee* during 1881-1882 supported the activity of the Indian Association, notably its propagation of the Civil Service issue, and its attempt to form affiliated ryots' unions in the countryside to check cases of oppression by zamindars.²³)

On 30 January 1883, the *Indian Mirror*²⁴ put up the following suggestion in an editorial entitled "The Ryots Representative in the Viceroy's Legislative Council": "As the zamindars are likely to be more than fully represented in the Viceroy's Legislative Council in the discussion on the provision of the Rent Bill, the Government should in common fairness appoint some gentleman who might do the same good turn for the inadequately represented ryots."²⁵ The suggestion started a journalistic controversy which centred on the question of nominating the potentially best qualified representative for the ryots. The *Statesman*²⁶ put for-

²¹ Indian Association meeting at Calcutta's Town Hall on 3 September 1879, Banerjea's speech "Establishment of Deputation in England", *Speeches*, Vol. I, p. 172.

²² Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, pp. 68-69.

²³ J. C. Bagal, *History of the Indian Association*, p. 54.

²⁴ Edited by Narendranath Sen, the then most influential Indian daily newspaper.

²⁵ The Rent Bill was to check zamindars' absentee land ownership.

²⁶ A liberal Anglo-Indian newspaper.

ward the candidature of Banerjea. The *Indian Mirror* suggested W. C. Bonnerji and disparaged Banerjea's candidature on the grounds that his dismissal from the Indian Civil Service stigmatized his character.²⁷ Letters to the editor of the *Indian Mirror* challenged its view on Banerjea and argued that Banerjea's dismissal from the Indian Civil Service should not "heap upon him damnation", since "his subsequent good conduct entirely blots out the spot" with which the editor of the *Indian Mirror* branded him.²⁸ Notwithstanding, the *Indian Mirror* continued to attack Banerjea and wrote, "A clamour has been raised . . . advocating the claims of Surendranath Banerjea. A capital has been made of his sympathies for the people. All his past life up to the point of his expulsion from the Civil Service will however be searched in vain for any indication of them. Emerging from Doveton College as Mr. S. N. Banerjea, B.A., he continued a thorough Sahib, until by the pressure of adverse circumstances he was thrown into the arms of the public to retrieve his reputation."²⁹ In reply to this attack, more letters to the editor of the *Indian Mirror* asserted confidence in Banerjea, arguing that "his dismissal from Government service is a positive gain to us, for were it not so, we would have been deprived of his sympathy and effective support in almost all our public movements."³⁰

Nothing came out of the suggestion to appoint a representative for the ryots, but the controversy which revolved over the nomination of Banerjea illustrates that Banerjea was regarded as an opportunist who took up public affairs only after he had been dismissed from the Government.

On 28 April 1883, Banerjea wrote and published an article in his *Bengalee* which criticized Justice Norris of the Calcutta High Court. Banerjea relied on an article published in the *Brahmo Public Opinion* on the 26th, which accused Justice Norris of offending Hindu religion by his order to bring into court a Saligram (a household stone idol), in order to decide its disputed ownership. Having quoted the article, Banerjea described Norris's order as "an act of sacrilege" committed by "a raw and inexperienced judge who was ignorant of the feelings of the people

²⁷ *Indian Mirror*, 3 February 1883.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 6 February 1883.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 8 February 1883.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 11 February 1883.

and disrespectful of their most cherished rights.”³¹ On the following day Banerjea was charged with contempt of court for publishing “contemptuous and defamatory matters concerning Justice Norris.”³² In fact, Justice Norris ordered to bring the idol only to the corridor of the court after ascertaining that thus far it would not defile Hindu religious rules.³³ Banerjea’s accusation was therefore completely unfounded. In court Banerjea pleaded that he was misled by the article of the *Brahmo Public Opinion* and regretfully apologized for his mistake. W. C. Bonnerji feebly defended Banerjea, and merely asked the court to deal with his client “as leniently as their lordships may think proper.”³⁴ He refused to support Banerjea’s request for an adjournment in order to clarify the legality of the court’s jurisdiction on contempt of court, committed outside the court.³⁵ In his summing up, the presiding Chief Justice Sir Richard Garth remarked that as a former member of the Indian Civil Service, Banerjea should have been more cautious and responsible. He was found guilty of contempt of court and sentenced to two months’ imprisonment.

The trial and sentence of Banerjea unexpectedly aroused an unprecedented Indian reaction, as it became the focal point of judicial, religious, racial and political repercussions which were connected with the fervent controversy over the Ilbert Bill.

Lord Ripon’s introduction of local self-government expressed his attempt to enforce English liberalism into the British administration of India. Englishmen in India, with few exceptions, resented Ripon’s intentions since they believed that the Indian Government should be an efficient administration for the Empire and less for Indian interests.³⁶ The conflicting views clashed over

³¹ *Bengalee*, 28 April 1883 (The date 2 April 1883 in Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 74 is a mistake).

³² Home Prog. Judicial, Vol. 2045, May 1883, proceedings 382-396, also *Indian Mirror*, 4 May and *Bengalee*, 12 May 1883.

³³ *Ibid.* ³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.* There was mutual reluctance between W. C. Bonnerji and Banerjea to present the latter’s defence. W. C. Bonnerji agreed only when no English lawyer was willing to defend Banerjea. The ill-feelings between them are attested in B. C. Pal’s *Memories of My Life and Times*, p. 13.

³⁶ For Local Self-Government and Englishmen’s reaction see S. Gopal, *The Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon*, Oxford, 1953 and W. C. Blunt, *Ideas About India*, London, 1885.

the Criminal Procedure Code Amendment Bill, better known as the Ilbert Bill. Its main principle was the removal of the stratagem which disqualified Indian judges from trying Englishmen in the countryside. The proposed Bill became a point of bitter controversy as Englishmen were not inclined to concede the right and capability of Indians to act as their judges.

After the Mutiny, Englishmen became further estranged from Indians. The increasingly better communications in India, and the quicker and steadier steamship communication with England through the Suez Canal, strengthened Englishmen's collective consciousness and broke their sense of isolation in India. The increasing arrival of Englishwomen³⁷ further contributed to their estrangement to Indians. The Club, the English Press, exclusive residential areas, were additional factors which accentuated their self-consciousness, while Evangelical ardour, Victorian self-confidence and the implication of Darwinism promoted their general feelings of superiority over Indians. In particular, they despised the English-educated "Baboos" of Bengal.

On 28 February 1883, an "Indignation Meeting" was held in Calcutta's Town Hall in which English lawyers, merchants, officials, and planters protested against the proposed Ilbert Bill. The principal speaker, Mr. Keswick, voiced the opinion of the meeting when he said: "Would native judges, by three to four years' residence in England, become so Europeanized in nature and in character that they would be able to judge Europeans as if they were European themselves? Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?"³⁸ The fundamental cause in the protest of Englishmen was their fear of the principle of equality of merit irrespective of race which lay behind the Ilbert Bill. Englishmen in India were most sensitive to the implications of this principle since they realized that it would jeopardize their hitherto entrenched privileges and prestige. While this was the general reaction to the proposed Bill, the tea planters in Assam were

³⁷ The total number of Englishmen in India in 1881 was 89,798, of these 77,188 were men and 12,610 women. Statistics of British born subjects recorded in the census of India February 1881. Quoted in S. Gopal, *The Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon*, p. 145.

³⁸ *Englishman*, 1 March 1883, also Parliamentary Papers, Vol. LX, C. 3952, 1884.

especially resentful of the possibility of their being tried by Indian judges. They feared that the Bill would check their arbitrary attitude to their coolies.³⁹ They argued that "occasional upset with the 'niggers' was inevitable; that English judges 'understood' the relationship between the planters and their coolies; and that if they would be under the jurisdiction of Indian judges they would be constantly arraigned for assault."⁴⁰

Expressing the general disapproval of officials to the proposed Ilbert Bill, J. Ware Edgar, Officiating Commissioner of Presidency Division, referred to Banerjea's appointment as Assistant Magistrate in Sylhet in 1871 and wrote: "I was at Shillong when this happened and met there many planters from Assam, particularly from Sylhet and Cachar districts. The planters expected that Mr. Surendranath Banerjea would in a short time be made a Justice of the Peace and they looked with great dread at the prospect of his being able not only to fine them heavily but to commit them to the High Court. Their uneasiness and even alarm was very great. More than this, they assumed that there would be henceforth a regular yearly influx of Native Civilians . . . and they prophesied that the consequence would be little short of ruin to the tea industry."⁴¹

The Commissioner of the Burdwan Division, John Beames, wrote: "There has been growing up of late years a class of natives who though numerically few, have become by their extravagant pretensions and excessive self-conceit, by their unreasonable and unsatisfied longing for power, and by their morbid discontent and disloyalty, a serious danger to the stability of our rule in India. It is we who have created these men, and we have now to fear lest as the poet writes 'we perish by the people we have made'."⁴²

³⁹ The harsh treatment of coolies in Assam and their deplorable conditions are analyzed by Banerjea in a Report of the Indian Association to the Government of India dated 12 April 1888 and entitled "Tea Garden Labour in Assam". See also B. C. Pal, *Memories of My Life and Times*, pp. 53-54.

⁴⁰ W. C. Blunt, *Ideas About India*, pp. 63-64.

⁴¹ Parliamentary Papers, Vol. LX, 1884, pp. 155-156, letter No. 34 dated 26 April 1883. Enclosure to F. B. Peacock, Officiating Secretary to Government of Bengal.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 197, letter No. 204 dated 7 May 1883.

The Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet, H. L. Johnson, wrote: "When an Englishman says 'I will not be tried by a Bengali', he has history, science, even the apostle Paul on his side. His assertion of his race superiority is specially justified by the fact that the Bengali belongs to a race he has conquered."⁴³

A satirical pamphlet entitled "India in 1983" argued that any encouragement to the Bengali Baboos would result in nothing less than the complete extinction of British rule; that a self-governing India would prove an abortive parliamentary democracy which would run into chaos and become subjected to military dictatorship.⁴⁴

The *Pioneer Mail* warned that English capital and enterprise will be driven out of India if the Ilbert Bill and the policy it represented were to be carried out.⁴⁵

On 7 March 1883, the *Englishman* announced the formation of an "Association for the protection of political and material rights, individual and collective, of Europeans and Anglo-Indians". It soon developed as "The Anglo-Indian and European Defence Association", set up local committees in the countryside, and organized numerous protest meetings, the most important of which were held by the Chamber of Commerce of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta.⁴⁶

The Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court, Sir Richard Garth, was hostile to Lord Ripon's liberal policy and strongly opposed the proposed Ilbert Bill.⁴⁷ Justice Norris, against whom Banerjea wrote the offending article, was particularly known for his abusive attitude towards Indian vakils and for his participation in the Town Hall "indignation meeting", while his wife was a prominent member of the "Ladies' Committee" against the Ilbert Bill.⁴⁸

It was amidst this strife that Banerjea was tried for his criticism of Justice Norris and sentenced by Sir Richard Garth to

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 354, letter No. 1005 dated 11 May 1883.

⁴⁴ "India in 1983", Calcutta, 1883, 3rd ed., I.O.L. Tract 10. A 9.

⁴⁵ *Pioneer Mail* editorial, "Jurisdiction over Europeans", 21 February 1883.

⁴⁶ *Englishman*, March to April 1883.

⁴⁷ S. Gopal, *The Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon*, pp. 120-121.

⁴⁸ Home Prog. Judicial, Vol. 2045, May 1883, proceedings 146-147; also *Bengalee*, 19 May 1883.

two months' imprisonment. It will be recalled that Banerjea was misled in relying on an article of the *Brahmo Public Opinion* which originated the accusation, and that he fully apologized for his mistake. However, while no proceedings were taken against the editor⁴⁹ of the *Brahmo Public Opinion*, Banerjea, who had become a popular public figure, was sentenced to two months' imprisonment. The immediate reaction to Banerjea's arrest was demonstrated by the students of Calcutta who booed the judges and threw stones at the windows of the court and at the carriage of Justice Norris.⁵⁰ On the other hand, an effigy of W. C. Bonnerji was burnt in Calcutta by students "for having defended Surendranath Banerjea unsatisfactorily."⁵¹ These were the first acts of militant protest in Calcutta by Bengali students.

Previous to the imprisonment of Banerjea, the Indian press took pains to maintain a moderate tone in the Ilbert Bill controversy. It refrained from aggravating Lord Ripon's exertion to turn the proposed Bill into law, since it realized that any form of retaliation to the insults of the *Englishman* and the *Pioneer* would have only intensified the Anglo-Indian agitation. But the trial and imprisonment of Banerjea served as an expedient outlet through which the restrained feelings of Indians were unleashed, especially since the *Englishman* provoked the Bengalis in its following comment on Banerjea's trial: "Babudom must remember that by insulting our judges, they are insulting the Queen and the whole British nation."⁵² The *Bengalee* championed Banerjea's case and argued that while the *Englishman* could attack even the Viceroy, the editor of an Indian newspaper was jailed merely for attacking an unpopular judge.⁵³ The *Madras Native Opinion* wrote: "It is impossible . . . not to set down the punishment inflicted on Babu Surendranath Banerjea to race feelings and race prejudice."⁵⁴ It will be recalled that in February 1883, the *Indian Mirror* disparaged Banerjea on account of his dismissal from the Indian Civil Service; yet in view of his imprisonment,

⁴⁹ Bhubon Mohan Das, father of C. R. Das.

⁵⁰ *Indian Mirror*, 9 May 1883.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 13 May 1883.

⁵² *Englishman*, 10 May 1883.

⁵³ *Bengalee Special Supplement*, 12 May 1883.

⁵⁴ *Indian Mirror*, 18 May 1883.

it joined in championing Banerjea's case and wrote that the reference by Sir Richard Garth to Banerjea's former experience in the Civil Service was calculated to put a slur on the Indian members of the Civil Service.⁵⁵ It attributed the unwillingness of English lawyers to defend Banerjea to "the bitterness of race feelings" which was shared by the English members of the Calcutta Bar.⁵⁶ It protested against the unprecedented heavy punishment inflicted on Banerjea and suggested that the decision of the judges was influenced by the current hostile feelings of the Calcutta High Court to the Ilbert Bill.⁵⁷ Letters to the editor of the *Indian Mirror* urged that Lal Mohan Ghosh, who had been sent by the Indian Association to England to express Indian grievances in the Indian Civil Service issue, should expose the injustice of Banerjea's sentence and also counteract the agitation of the Anglo-Indians in England.⁵⁸

On 8 May 1883, the Students' Association of Calcutta held a meeting to express its sympathy for Banerjea and decided to start a fund to finance an appeal to the Privy Council in London.⁵⁹ Although Banerjea expressed his apology to the Court, the students of the Free Church Institution (where Banerjea was a teacher), held a meeting which projected Banerjea's remarks on Justice Norris as "an honest desire to protect those national interests of which he [Banerjea] has so long been the faithful representative."⁶⁰

In Poona and Allahabad, public meetings of English-educated Indians expressed "profound regret and sympathy" for Banerjea.⁶¹

At Santipur, a meeting was held by the local zamindars in sympathy with Banerjea.⁶²

At Kadihathy—a village north of Dum Dum—an open-air meeting was organized and attended by the local peasants.⁶³

A newly founded "Ladies Association" held a meeting in Calcutta in which "seventy ladies, wives of gentlemen who occupied high position in native society", decided to send Mrs. Banerjea a letter of sympathy. Both the *Indian Mirror* and the *Bengalee*

⁵⁵ *Indian Mirror*, 8 May 1883.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 4 May 1883.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 6 May 1883.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 9 May 1883.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 12 May 1883.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 13 May 1883.

⁶² *Ibid.* ⁶³ *Ibid.*

commented that this novel feature was an index to the widespread stir of the community's feelings.⁶⁴

An open-air mass meeting was held in Calcutta on 16 May in which an estimated number of 20,000 people were present. Most of the shops in several Bazaars were closed as an expression of protest against Banerjea's imprisonment.⁶⁵

At Aligarh, a meeting was presided over by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, which regarded Banerjea's arrest as "national calamity". It resolved to send Banerjea its sympathy and to send a telegram to the Viceroy to pardon him.⁶⁶

On 13 May a meeting of Indian members of the Bar was held in Naral, which described Banerjea as "a martyr for the cause of the country and religion."⁶⁷

Although Banerjea was known as an ardent advocate of the Brahmo Samaj and as a "London-return" who shunned observance of Hindu orthodoxy, a meeting of the Pandits of Bhataparah (a reputed place of Sanskrit learning in Bengal) resolved to send Banerjea the following telegram: "The Pandits of Bhataparah have been deeply touched by the recent conduct of one of the judges of the High Court of Calcutta, and they consider such conduct as interference with the principle of religious neutrality."⁶⁸

Similarly, a public meeting held in the temple of Kali at Kalighat, resolved that "the religious feelings of the Hindu community have been wounded by the production of a Saligram into court."⁶⁹

Within three weeks of Banerjea's imprisonment, the Bengali reaction spread to numerous places throughout North India.⁷⁰

The following summary of the resolutions of the public meeting held in Lahore, typified the resolutions of other meetings.

1. The residents assembled in this meeting record their deep sense of grief for the sentence of imprisonment recently passed on our distinguished countryman and patriot Babu

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, and *Bengalee*, 19 May 1883. ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 17 May 1883.

⁶⁶ *Indian Mirror*, 17 May 1883. ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 30 May 1883.

⁷⁰ A full list of places in which public meetings were held is compiled by Ram Chandra Palit, *The Great Contempt Case*, Calcutta, 1883.

Surendranath Banerjea, and express their heartfelt sympathy with him in prison.

2. This meeting is of opinion that the bringing of the Saligram into the corridor of the Calcutta High Court, even with the consent of the parties, was a sacrilege upon the religion of the Hindus throughout India.
3. The exercise of the undefined and unlimited powers which the High Court had assumed in the case of Babu Surendranath Banerjea was a severe blow to the liberty and freedom of the Indian press and consequently to the progress of the country at large.⁷¹

The Lahore meeting expressed the significance of the Indian reaction when its principal speaker, Dewan Narendra Nath said: "We never united together for a common cause, that spirit of keeping aloof died away and now Punjabis and Bengalis shake hands with each other as brothers. Surendra Babu's imprisonment contributed towards the consummation of Indian unity, hence I call it an occasion for national rejoicing rather than national mourning."⁷²

The newspapers kindled this feeling. The *Tribune* of Lahore wrote: "The Ilbert Bill . . . has brought together the people of India of different races and creeds into one common bond of union . . . the growing feeling of national unity which otherwise would have taken us years to form, suddenly developed into strong sentiments."⁷³

In its special supplement on Banerjea's imprisonment, the *Bengalee* described the Indian agitation in terms of "a revival of national feelings" and added "the excitement in the native community is nothing short of that produced among the Europeans by the jurisdiction Bill."⁷⁴

The *Punjab Times* wrote: "We have learnt to disregard our petty provincial differences and are slowly feeling a new life, the life of Indian nationality."⁷⁵

A reflection on this development is attested to by the rapid growth of cheap vernacular newspapers whose circulation reached

⁷¹ *Bengalee*, 2 June 1883. ⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Tribune*, 7 May 1883. ⁷⁴ *Bengalee*, 12 May 1883.

⁷⁵ *Punjab Times*, 31 May 1883.

for the first time thousands of readers.⁷⁶ While contributions were donated to Banerjea's appeal fund, a central committee headed by Narendranath Sen was appointed to collect the money and acknowledge its receipt in the *Indian Mirror*.

Tarapada Bannerjee, a vakil in Krishnagar, first suggested in a letter to the *Indian Mirror*⁷⁷ that a public meeting should be convened to establish a "National Fund". He proposed that the committee which had been appointed to collect the subscriptions to Banerjea's appeal fund, should be enlarged to include fifteen representatives from different provinces of India. The enlarged committee would then form a committee for the National Fund which will be employed for various issues "affecting the whole nation." Tarapada Bannerjee corresponded with Surendranath Banerjea while the latter was in jail about the proposed National Fund. Banerjea supported the idea and sent from jail letters to "friends in different parts of India to contribute their mite towards the great object."⁷⁸ The *Indian Mirror* strongly supported Tarapada Bannerjee's proposal and wrote: "We must struggle hard and long and at the same time remain strictly faithful and loyal before we can become independent again. But so long as we do not provide ourselves with a political organization and a National Fund we shall never be able to do permanent and substantial good to our country."⁷⁹ It emphasized that Indians should follow the example of the "Anglo-Indian and European Defence Fund", that the widespread agitation over Banerjea's imprisonment proved Indians' capability to unite, and urged that this advantageous opportunity should be taken up to form a national political organization which would be supported by the proposed National Fund.

Tarapada Bannerjee followed up his suggestion and outlined the following plan and objectives of the National Fund:

- (a) To keep a permanent delegate in England to counteract the agitation of Englishmen in India which endeavoured to frustrate the social and political progress of Indians.

⁷⁶ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 80.

⁷⁷ *Indian Mirror*, 22 May 1883.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 22 August 1883, letter dated 5 June 1883.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 30 May 1883.

- (b) To adopt suitable means for the purpose of imparting political education to the people of India.
- (c) To encourage national trade and industry.
- (d) To unite the different religious sects of India.
- (e) To establish branch associations of the National Fund in different parts of India.
- (f) "National Fund Boxes" should be made available in marriage ceremonies, as well as in every law court where Indian lawyers would ask their winning clients to donate contributions.

His proposed scheme closed with the following words: "The 4th of May, the day of Surendranath's imprisonment, ought to be commemorated in his honour and every good son of India ought to contribute on that auspicious day something to the National Fund. The 4th of May should be observed as the day on which the seed of National life was sown."⁸⁰

These proposals resulted in a public meeting convened by the Indian Association, which announced the inauguration of the National Fund.⁸¹ Banerjea (who was released on the 9th of July) moved the following resolution: "The National Fund should be raised with a view to secure the political advancement of the country by means of constitutional agitation in India and England and by other legitimate means; and that the other provinces be invited to join in the movement."⁸² The executive committee of the Indian Association appointed five trustees for the National Fund among whom were Banerjea and Narendranath Sen. Banerjea was also appointed the secretary of the National Fund.⁸³ From the first of August, the contributions to Banerjea's appeal fund were acknowledged side by side with donations to the National Fund. The fund for Banerjea⁸⁴ was transferred on August 4th to the balance of the National Fund. Thus, Banerjea's imprisonment served as an expedient cause which galvanized the Indian counter reaction to the Anglo-Indian agitation against the Ilbert Bill. It led

⁸⁰ *Indian Mirror*, 14 July 1883.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 18 July 1883.

⁸² *Ibid.*, and Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 85.

⁸³ *Bengalee*, 4 August 1883 and *Indian Mirror*, 29 July 1883.

⁸⁴ It fetched the sum of Rs. 6,955.

to the formation of the National Fund and strengthened the Indian Association.

While contributions were being sent to the National Fund,⁸⁵ it was suggested that the fund should be employed to finance the education of the masses in the villages and that agricultural banks should be established to lend ryots money on favourable terms.⁸⁶ In his speech on the National Fund, Banerjee emphasized its wide-range national objectives and urged the need to improve the conditions of the ryots.⁸⁷ These suggestions aroused the opposition of the zamindars to the Indian Association and to its management of the National Fund. The zamindars detected in the objectives of the National Fund a threat to their class interests, and the *Hindu Patriot* expressed their apprehension in writing that if the zamindars were to contribute to the National Fund, they will be virtually "giving money to buy a knife to cut their own throat."⁸⁸ Due to this objection, letters to the editor of the *Indian Mirror* urged that the National Fund should be taken away from the control of the Indian Association and be placed under a new organization to be called the "National Association" or the "National Assembly". The new organization would have branches in every province and would regularly meet from year to year.⁸⁹

These developments brought about the meeting of the first "National Conference" which was held on 29 December 1883 at Calcutta. Surendranath Banerjea and Ananda Mohan Bose were its leading organizers. The composition of the National Conference was a far cry from the name it assumed, since its "delegates" were self-appointed, self-representative men who came to Calcutta primarily to visit the International Exhibition, which was held at the time. Nevertheless, the participants of the National Conference were representatives in the sense that they came from different provinces and deliberated jointly on common political grievances. Significantly, the National Conference was depicted by A. M. Bose as the first stage towards the formation of a National Indian Parliament.⁹⁰ Banerjea moved the resolution on the National Fund.

⁸⁵ It fetched the sum of Rs. 20,000.

⁸⁶ *Indian Mirror*, 15 August 1883.

⁸⁷ *Speeches*, Vol. II, p. 45, "The National Fund", Calcutta, 27 July 1883.

⁸⁸ *Indian Mirror*, 27 July 1883.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 3 August and 4 August 1883.

⁹⁰ W. C. Blunt, *Ideas About India*, p. 114.

He urged the conference to take up the example of the Anglo-Indians' efficient and uniform organization which succeeded in defeating the proposed Ilbert Bill, and to break away from their status of "hewers of wood and drawers of water."⁹¹

It was the "Civil Service Question" which received the major attention of the Conference. The Conference recommended to abolish the Indian Civil Service and replace it gradually by a service entirely composed of Indian officials. To hasten this process, the Conference urged the need to hold simultaneous examinations for the Indian Civil Service in London and in India, and to raise the age limit of candidates to twenty-two. The Conference expressed its protest against the compromise reached by the Government of India and the Anglo-Indians over the Ilbert Bill, and concluded by requesting the Government to introduce representative assemblies "for the advancement of the people of India."⁹²

While the National Fund and the National Conference were primarily the outcome of the Indian counter reaction to the Anglo-Indians' agitation, they were at the same time inspired by the pro-Indian policy of Lord Ripon. Ripon upheld the idea that British rule in India was ultimately designed to fulfil a special mission. His liberalism and his religious convictions led him to describe England's mission in the following words: "If England is to fulfil the mighty task which God has laid upon her and to interpret rightly the wondrous story of her Indian Empire, she must lend her untiring energies and her iron will to raise in the scale of nations the people entrusted to her care . . . to rule them not for her own aggrandisement nor for the mere profit of her own people, but with constant unwearied endeavouring to promote their highest good . . . their political training and their moral elevation."⁹³

⁹¹ *Bengalee*, 5 January 1884.

On 29 March 1883, the following advertisement was published in the *Englishman*: "Wanted—sweepers, Punkah coolies [fan movers] and Bhis-ties [water carriers] for the residents of Saidpur. None but educated Bengali Baboos who have passed the Entrance Examinations need apply. Ex-Deputy Magistrates (Bengali) preferred". The "preferred qualification" could have applied only to Banerjea.

⁹² *Bengalee*, 5 January 1884.

⁹³ Ripon's reply to an Indian public meeting held in his honour before his departure from Bombay. *Bengalee*, 27 December 1884.

The idea of England's mission in India was of course not new. In 1824, Thomas Munro asserted that the ultimate aim of British rule was to prepare the Indians to govern themselves.⁹⁴ In 1833, Macaulay declared: "It may be that the public mind in India may expand under our system till it has outgrown that system, that by good government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government; that having become instructed in European knowledge, they may, in some future age, demand European institutions . . . whenever it comes it will be the proudest day in English history."⁹⁵ In 1844, Henry Lawrence wrote: "We cannot expect to hold India for ever. Let us so conduct ourselves . . . as, when the connexion ceases, it may do so not with convulsion but with mutual esteem and affection and that England may then have in India a noble ally, enlightened and brought into the scale of nations under her guidance and fostering care."⁹⁶

Thus, while British rule was being extended over India, British rulers and administrators declared that the whole process of establishing British paramountcy was motivated by the desire to accomplish a mission directed at the elevation of Indians to higher standards of Western civilization.

It would seem, then, that Ripon's idea of England's mission in India was not a novel innovation. However, when Thomas Munro and Henry Lawrence thought about the elevation of their Indian subjects to political self-determination, they took it for granted that the future Indian political leaders would come from the "natural leaders" of Indian society, the Maharajas and the zamindars. When Macaulay foresaw in 1833, the day when Indians will demand English political institutions, he shared the belief that Indian political leadership would be drawn from the princes and great landlords of India and his belief in this potential political graduation was necessarily only a pointer to "some future age". Macaulay, Munro and Lawrence made their declarations about England's mission before the Mutiny, and at a time when the vast

⁹⁴ Munro's Minute of 31 December 1824—"The ultimate problem of British rule in India", Reginald Coupland, *India: A Re-Statement*, Oxford University Press, 1945, p. 291.

⁹⁵ House of Commons, 10 July 1833, Hansard XIX (1833) 536.

⁹⁶ Sir Henry Lawrence, *Essays*, London 1859. Reginald Coupland, *India: A Re-Statement*, p. 293.

economic and political importance of the Indian Empire could not have been fully appreciated.

When Ripon reasserted the duty of implementing England's mission, in 1884, the Indian political leaders were coming forth not from the "natural leaders" but from the new middle class English-educated Indians who were no longer potential trainees but were beginning to reach the stage which was envisaged by Macaulay. Furthermore, Ripon supported their political aspirations to participate in the administration of the British Government of India, when the economic and political importance of the Indian Empire were becoming increasingly apparent. He emphasized that Queen Victoria's Proclamation⁹⁷ was the guiding principle for Her Majesty's Government of India. He asserted that the Proclamation gave pledges to Her Majesty's Indian subjects; pledges, which were the duty of Her Majesty's representatives to redeem. In support of Ripon's assertion, Gladstone assured an Indian deputation in London that "the Proclamation . . . may be looked upon as affording a solemn guarantee for all the future proceedings of England in her relations with India."⁹⁸ Yet, in spite of these assurances, the Ilbert Bill—regarded by the Indians as an instalment of pledges promised by the Proclamation and a test case for the implementation of "England's mission"—was mutilated. The opposition of the Anglo-Indians against it forced Lord Ripon to a compromise, by which European and British subjects in India could claim trial by jury composed of at least one-half European members.⁹⁹ Although Ripon did not succeed in getting the Bill passed, he was lauded by Indians as the Viceroy who "realised

⁹⁷ The Proclamation (1 November 1858) contained the following clause: "We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects; and those obligations, by the Blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil. And it is our further will that, so far as it may be, our subjects of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity, duly to discharge."

⁹⁸ *Bengalee*, 1 March 1884.

⁹⁹ Describing the powerful influence of the non-official English community, Sir Henry Cotton observed: "Their numbers have augmented, their interests in industries like jute and tea, coal and cotton, have extended, and the Chambers of Commerce at Presidency towns are now a power which is able to withstand the Government and too often leads and dictates its

the great mission of England in India and who sought to fulfil it."¹⁰⁰ Indeed, the very fact of Ripon's inability to get the Bill through, coupled with the fierce attacks by the Anglo-Indians on his pro-Indian policy, further enhanced his popularity among the Indians. In his reply to the address of the British Indian Association in Calcutta, Ripon emphasized that, in the absence of representative institutions, the Indian Press and the various Indian Associations should function not only as passive instruments through which the Government could ascertain public opinion on its administrative measures, but as vehicles which should exercise discriminating criticism on the policy of the Government in the interests of Indians.¹⁰¹

The tour of Ripon through Northern India before his departure evoked a series of enthusiastic public demonstrations in which Indians expressed their gratitude to the retiring Viceroy.¹⁰² These public demonstrations which were held wherever the Viceroy's train stopped, were described as a "grand national demonstration" in which vast crowds cheered the Viceroy with chants of "Lord Ripon ki jai", while banners in Calcutta waved slogans of "Liberty, Equality—Lord Ripon the just" and in Poona "India for the Indians."¹⁰³

Banerjea described these celebrations as the "beginning of a united national life and the birth of a new spirit."¹⁰⁴ Even the *Pioneer* commented, "this outburst of feeling has a deep political significance . . . proving that Native opinion is at last a power in the country."¹⁰⁵ On the other hand, referring to the successful Anglo-Indian agitation against the Ilbert Bill, the *Englishman* wrote: "If the lesson . . . read to Lord Ripon serves to show to policy." Sir Henry Cotton, *New India or India in Transition*, London, 1904, p. 54 (first edition 1885).

¹⁰⁰ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 85.

¹⁰¹ *Bengalee*, 13 December 1884.

¹⁰² Wilfrid Blunt was told by Subramanya Iyer—Editor of the *Hindu*—that hitherto people in the villages have only known the local Collector, but Lord Ripon was not only known by name but was regarded as a new incarnation of God. W. C. Blunt, *India under Ripon*, London, 1909, pp. 37-38.

¹⁰³ *Bengalee*, 6 December 1884. *Indian Mirror*, 3 December 1884, Golden printed issue in honour of Ripon.

¹⁰⁴ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 88.

¹⁰⁵ *Pioneer*, 20 December 1884.

future rulers of this country that an ounce of practice is worth a ton of theory and that cheap popularity hunting is not the way to reconcile the natives to British rule, it will not have been read in vain."¹⁰⁶

This lesson implied that regardless of Ripon's declarations about England's mission, and in spite of his attempts to remove Englishmen's superiority over Indians before the law, the pressure of interests and events in India defeated his intentions. Moreover, the lesson implied that, while Gladstone and Ripon declared, "We plead our main title for our presence in India the good of India"—by which they meant the good of the Indians—the outcome of the Ilbert Bill proved that in fact Indians were not Her Majesty's equal subjects, but second-rate subjects who could at best serve in second-rate functional posts in the government of British India.

Banerjea ignored the pragmatic conclusion drawn by the *Englishman* and drew sustenance solely from the concept of "England's mission" in India as reasserted by Ripon. In his speech on the proposed National Fund, he declared that it should be raised to secure political advancement by means of constitutional agitation in India and in England.¹⁰⁷ He defined constitutional agitation as "an agitation which must be carried only within the limits of the law."¹⁰⁸ He asserted that Indians should hold public meetings or send deputations and petitions to protest against acts of the Government, but he qualified the form of the protest by emphasizing, "We may do nothing which even remotely has the appearance of illegality about it. We take our stand upon the . . . basis of the law and constitution. There we stand and there we intend to remain. We shall not permit ourselves to be dislodged from it, or be provoked to quitting it and we shall discountenance all proceedings calculated even remotely to bring about a violation of the law. We may lose today we may lose the day after, but if our cause is based on justice and truth it is bound to succeed in the long run."¹⁰⁹ He concluded, "for the maintenance of our rights and for the preservation of the credit of the Government it becomes our duty to practise moderation."¹¹⁰ In expounding this concept of constitutional agitation—which was later to form the pivot of the

¹⁰⁶ *Englishman*, 25 September 1884. ¹⁰⁷ *Speeches*, Vol. II, p. 43.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* ¹⁰⁹ *Speeches*, Vol. II, p. 44.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

Congress—Banerjea stressed that the Indian counter agitation, which reflected the discontent and dissatisfaction of Indians in cities and mofussil, should not be allowed to get out of hand and develop revolutionary tendencies. Banerjea urged the formation of more Associations in order to “unite the middle and upper middle classes in every province” and assured the meeting of the National Fund that through the pursuance of constitutional agitation, India will ultimately attain the status of equality with the self-governing colonies of the Crown.¹¹¹

In a resumé of the events of the year 1883, Banerjea wrote in the *Bengalee* of 5 January 1884, that the National Fund, the Contempt Case, and the Indian counter-agitation had evoked national aspirations, which, he went on, “we trust in God will continue to deepen till at last by our patriotic efforts we shall be in a position to claim what belongs to us, to place our country on footing of equality with regards to political rights and privileges with the other possessions of the English Crown, to the benefit of India and the glory of England.”

On 26 April 1884, the *Bengalee* published the following editorial: “The members of the Legislative Council in Jamaica are to be elected and not nominated and they are to exercise control over the finances. Is our political degradation to be perpetual? Are we to understand that we are even less fitted for self-government than the Negroes?”

The term self-government was used by Banerjea as early as 1876 when he addressed the first meeting of the Students' Association of Calcutta: “The great struggle, the constitutional struggle for our rights and privileges has commenced . . . the struggle which must end in the achievement of self-government for the people of this country.”¹¹² Banerjea was thus the first Indian professional political agitator who promulgated the idea of self-government. But it should be immediately pointed out that in Banerjea's terminology “self-government” was never synonymous with independence, in the sense of India becoming a sovereign state. On the contrary, Banerjea could only envisage that when India would eventually attain a status of self-government comparable to that of the self-governing dominions, this stage would “mark the perpetual union”

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² *Speeches*, Vol. I, p. 63, July 1876.

between England and India.¹¹³ He repeatedly stressed that the aim of attaining self-government for India was to secure the permanence of British rule "upon the broad basis of the nation's affection."¹¹⁴ He explicitly contended, "It is not severance that we are looking forward to, but unification, permanent embodiment as an integral part of that great Empire which has given the rest of the world the models of free institutions."¹¹⁵ When Banerjea wrote or spoke hypothetically about a time in the future when the ties between England and India might cease, he always qualified this remark with—"May God avert that day of our calamity!"¹¹⁶ In his oration on "England and India" he described the pathetic state of India prior to the arrival of the British, as a country which "sat bathed in tears, sending forth dolorous cries of lamentation before the great Dispenser . . . but it was not long before the heavenly response came. Britain appeared as the ministering angel, bearing messages of peace and joy, the glad-tidings of progress and civilization."¹¹⁷ Banerjea earnestly believed that British rule in India was providentially ordained for the salvation of India.¹¹⁸ He firmly believed that the declarations of Macaulay, Munro, Lawrence, Ripon and Gladstone about England's mission expressed the *raison d'être* of Britain's rule in India and the guiding spirit behind its government. When Banerjea spoke about the need for Indian unity, he endeavoured to echo Macaulay and stressed that England's mission in India was "to save, regenerate, emancipate from the chains of ignorance, error and superstition, 250 millions of human beings, to heal the wounds that have been inflicted on them by the rapacity of their former rulers, to develop in them a self-reliant, energetic character, to spread through the land the great blessings of peace, contentment and happiness, but above all it is England's noble mission to help towards the consummation of

¹¹³ *Speeches*, Vol. I, p. 226, May 1880.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7, April 1876.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 85. Presidential speech at 1895 Indian National Congress.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 72, 28 April 1877.

¹¹⁷ *Speeches*, Vol. I, p. 67, April 1877.

¹¹⁸ Banerjea's declaration: "I regard British rule as Providential, as one of the dispensation of the God of history"—is a typical example. *Speeches*, Vol. II, p. 49, July 1883.

Indian unity.”¹¹⁹ At the height of the Ilbert Bill agitation, Banerjea repeated this theme and emphasized that “England is here . . . to make India once again the home of a civilization even nobler than what had marked the dawn of her early history. To a government with such a purpose and with such a destiny we cannot be unfaithful or disloyal.”¹²⁰ This belief in the providential mission of British rule in India was for Banerjea axiomatic and it formed the basis for his political moderation. Above all Banerjea relied on Queen Victoria’s Proclamation. Although the Proclamation stressed that English-educated Indians were not to be barred from the Civil Service of the British government of India with the reservation of, “so far as it may be”—a stipulation which in its substance merely reaffirmed the Charter Act of 1833¹²¹—Banerjea interpreted the Proclamation as a Royal pledge to safeguard the general rights of the Indians.

When the title of “Empress of India” was conferred upon Queen Victoria in 1876, he did not regard it merely as a sentimental gesture but declared that henceforth Indians were no longer the conquered subjects of England, but the “incorporated citizens of a free Empire.”¹²² He accepted the view put forward by Sir John Seely,¹²³ which explained the establishment and growth of British rule in India as an internal process in which locally-settled English traders in India rose to power due to their superiority over other indigenous contestants, and added that since British rule did not result from an external conquest, it was not an alien rule but one which was based on an organic and indigenous Indian growth. He further deduced that the Indians elected the English as their rulers, and opined that by doing so “they were not unwise in their choice.”¹²⁴ When Lord Ripon was greeted by the cheering crowds

¹¹⁹ *Speeches*, Vol. I, “Indian Unity”, March 1878, p. 108.

¹²⁰ *Speeches*, Vol. II, “The Civil Service”, Lahore, 8 May 1884, p. 67.

¹²¹ The 87th section of the Charter Act said: “No native of the said territories [India] or any natural born subjects of His Majesty resident therein, shall by reason of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office, or employment under the said Company.”

¹²² *Speeches*, Vol. I, p. 145, April 1878.

¹²³ Sir John Seely, *The Expansion of England*, London, 1884, p. 208.

¹²⁴ *Bengalee*, 26 April 1884.

of Calcutta, Banerjea compared the reception given to Ripon to that of Rama's legendary return to the city of Ayodhya.¹²⁵

To resolve the contradiction between the theory of England's mission and the failure of Ripon's attempt to implement its spirit, Banerjea contended that the Indian Civil Service showed, in its opposition to the Ilbert Bill, that it was officialdom which defied the idea of England's mission and paid no heed to the Queen's Proclamation. Hence, while he urged the pursuance of constitutional agitation in India, he emphasized that its main efforts should be directed towards England. It followed from his assertion that since the Government of India was not a representative Government, Indians could by-pass the Government of India and appeal directly to the English people and to Parliament in England. In his speech on the Ilbert Bill he complacently assured his listeners that "England the mother of free nations is ever foremost in her sympathy with those who are struggling for their rights. The same measure of sympathy will be extended to us as has been extended to others if we earnestly appeal to England." Thus, he assumed that if Indians were to appeal to Englishmen in England, the latter would respond in a way which will bring about the abolition of racial discrimination in India and the elevation of the Indians to the equal status of British subjects.¹²⁶

When Banerjea made a second tour through Northern India during May-June 1884, he stressed, in public meetings in Benares, Allahabad, Kanpur, Lucknow, Agra, Aligarh, Delhi, Ambala, Amritsar, Lahore, Multan and Rawalpindi, the need for increased employment of English-educated Indians in the I.C.S. and the introduction of representative institutions, and also emphasized that the National Fund should be deployed to maintain a permanent Indian delegate in England to represent the Indian view before the English public.¹²⁷

At the same time it followed that if Indians could gain the support of Englishmen in England, Englishmen with their power of the vote would act as a lever for Indian representation in Parliament. Banerjea upheld Parliament as the key to the redressal of Indian grievances. When Lal Mohan Ghosh became the first Indian

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 20 December 1884.

¹²⁶ *Speeches*, Vol. II, p. 60, January 1884.

¹²⁷ *Bengalee*, *Tribune of Lahore*, *Maratha of Poona*, 21 June 1884.

candidate to contest an election to Parliament on behalf of the Liberals, Banerjea described the event as "a question of national honour."¹²⁸ Narendranath Sen, editor of the *Indian Mirror*, shared the same view and urged that "the Indian Council should be swept away to enable Indian affairs to be brought under the direct control of Parliament."¹²⁹ Parliamentary inquiry into the administration of India and the abolition of the Council of the Secretary of State for India, were to form the first and second Resolutions of the first Indian National Congress.

During the years 1883-1884, the Indian counter reaction to the Anglo-Indian agitation over the Ilbert Bill, developed into a movement which was centred on the National Fund, through which the hitherto provincial self-centred English-educated Indians became united for the first time by a common cause. The National Fund was initially concerned with urging the wider admission of English-educated Indians to the I.C.S. and the introduction of representative institutions. It soon exceeded its initial purposes and developed into a wider, popular movement when the villagers of Bengal were stirred by the Indian Association to express within the framework of the National Fund movement, their general grievances arising out of hardships in the villages. But since the National Fund was primarily organized by urbanized middle class English-educated Indians, its objects were bound up with the interests of its promoters and hardly with those of the Indian peasants. As soon as public meetings in the villages showed that they might possibly develop into something more active than vocal protests, Banerjea, the principal figure around whom the Indian agitation revolved, halted the progress of this development by manoeuvring it into constitutional agitation, which was intelligible and meaningful only to the English-educated urban middle class Indians. The 1883-1884 National Fund movement contained within itself potential elements which could have developed into a wider and more popular movement; yet it was curbed by the intellectual character of the constitutional agitation and lost its wider appeal.

In the Indian Association, National Fund, and National Conference, Banerjea served as the principal figure. From being a scapegoat at the Calcutta High Court he stumbled into Indian martyr-

¹²⁸ *Bengalee*, 27 September 1884.

¹²⁹ *Indian Mirror*, 7 November 1884.

dom. His own apology was dismissed by the judges and ignored by the Indians. Though he was known to be a Brahmo "free thinker", he was artificially and intentionally made up to act the role of the defender of Hindu religion. While the Indian press magnified Banerjea's "contempt case", the *Pioneer* wrote: "Had Surendra done something courageous . . . that bore the impress of nobility and manliness, one could understand that he should find many sympathisers among his countrymen; as it is, one can only wonder unfeignedly at the extraordinary choice they have made of a hero."¹³⁰ As a result of his dismissal from the Indian Civil Service, Banerjea channelled his career to "public affairs" and became an Indian hero in his role as a public agitator. His speeches, his tours through Northern India, his activities in founding the Indian Association, his journalism—all combined to build around him the reputation of a public figure. His trial and imprisonment in the atmosphere of the Ilbert Bill controversy, unexpectedly shot him up into a position of a national leader.

The reaction to Banerjea's arrest revealed the strength and weakness of the Indian response to the Anglo-Indian agitation; while it also set a pattern in the development of Indian organization. It had evoked for the first time political rowdyism of the Calcutta students which later developed, in one form, into terrorism. It led to the first open-air meetings in which ryots took active part, and to Town Hall meetings in which the procedure of proposing, seconding and passing high-sounding resolutions was developed by self-appointed leaders. It revealed that the zamindars detected in the popular aspect of the National Fund a threat to their vested interests. It showed that in 1883, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan thought about Banerjea's arrest in terms of "national calamity".

While the National Conference was the precursor of the Indian National Congress, it typified the activities of the Congress as far as 1905 in its character and context. It adhered to pursue the political advancement of English-educated Indians through legitimate means and constitutional agitation. It fostered the idea that it was first essential to win the support of public opinion in England, and it directed its petitions and resolutions to Parliament in Westminster instead of bringing pressure on the Government of

¹³⁰ *Pioneer*, 18 June 1883.

India in India. But, above all, it revealed what the Anglo-Indians were sensitive to note, that a political organization which fostered Indian unity, would inevitably press forward requests or demands for a larger share in the administration of the government, until it would claim some form of self-government.

CHAPTER II

THE CHARACTER AND IDEAS OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, 1885-1895

ON 28 DECEMBER 1885, the first session of the Indian National Congress was held in Bombay. It coincided with the second National Conference at Calcutta. While the National Conference of 1883 was organized by the Indian Association, the 1885 National Conference had a wider representation, with delegates from the Indian Association, the British Indian Association and the Central Mohamedan Association.¹ Banerjea had been appointed secretary of the Indian Association on 1 March 1885, and was the leading organizer of the second National Conference.² The Conference reiterated the resolutions passed in the 1883 National Conference, and stressed the necessity of reforming the Legislative Councils by allowing election of Indian representatives.

In explaining his absence from the first meeting of the Indian National Congress, Banerjea wrote that he had been invited by W. C. Bonnerji but had to excuse himself on account of his commitment to the Calcutta National Conference.³ This version is refuted by the following statement of Bipin Chandra Pál: "It should be placed on record, before those who know it pass away, that some of the most prominent members of the first National Congress, deliberately kept Surendranath out of it."⁴ Banerjea's dismissal from the Indian Civil Service and his imprisonment during the Ilbert Bill controversy, were a record which the ultra-cautious organizers of the first Indian National Congress, Alan Octa-

¹ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 98.

² *Tribune* of Lahore, 12 December 1885. Banerjea issued a circular to all political associations in which he invited their participation in the National Conference in order to adopt "a common programme as the basis for united action on behalf of the different bodies scattered throughout the country."

³ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, pp. 98-99.

⁴ B. C. Pal, *Indian Nationalism: Its Principles and Personalities*, Madras 1918, pp. 97-98.

vian Hume in particular, did not favour. Hence they preferred not to associate him with the first Congress.⁵ In his presidential address to the first Congress, W. C. Bonnerji described the Congress as the "National Assembly of India", and explained that it would promote Indian national unity by projecting from a single platform the common interests of Indians throughout India. He argued that although the participants of the first Congress were not elected in the same manner as the members of the House of Commons, they were nevertheless the selected representatives of the major provinces and towns of India, and could therefore claim to be the representatives of the people of India. He asserted that they were following a course which was modelled on the English constitution, which justified the representation of their views to the Government. He concluded by emphasizing that Congressmen desired the permanence of British rule in India, and that their ultimate aim was only to gain a share in the administration of its government.⁶

The Congress was conceived as "the germ of a Native Parliament."⁷ It was to prove that English-educated Indians were fit to have representative institutions through which they would be able to participate in the British Government of India, and it pledged to pursue this objective strictly by constitutional methods.

In its resolutions, the first Congress recommended that a Royal Commission should be appointed to examine the Indian administration; that the Council of the Secretary of State for India should be abolished so that Parliament would take direct control of the Government of India; that the Legislative Councils should be reformed to enable admission of Indian elected members, and that competitive examinations for the Indian Civil Service should be held simultaneously in England and in India. Dadabhai Naoroji expressed the main contention implicit in these resolutions when he declared: "We are British subjects, we can demand what we are entitled to . . . if we are denied Britain's best institutions what good is it to India to be under the British sway? It will be simply another Asiatic despotism."⁸

⁵ Hamendranath Das Gupta, *The Indian National Congress*, Calcutta, 1946, p. 129.

⁶ *Report of the first I.N.C. Bombay 1885*, pp. 7-8.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁸ *Report of the first I.N.C. Bombay 1885*, p. 26.

Like Banerjea, W. C. Bonnerji and Dadabhai Naoroji believed that prior to the establishment of British supremacy in India, their country suffered from a perpetual state of political anarchy. Although they paid lip service to their Indian heritage, they were avowed admirers of Western political values. They held the concepts of equality before the law, of freedom of speech and Press, and the principle of representative government as incomparably superior to their traditional Hindu polity which they generally termed as "Asiatic despotism".

When the second Congress met in December 1886 at Calcutta, its organizers realized that Banerjea's exclusion from the session would arouse a strong protest from his supporters in Bengal.⁹ Hence, Banerjea and his followers in the Indian Association were incorporated within the Congress. In his presidential address to the second Congress, Dadabhai Naoroji rhetorically asked if anyone could have imagined that a meeting of Indians from different parts of India could assemble to speak as one nation even in the most glorious days of Hindu rule. This, he went on to say, was possible under British rule and under British rule only. He attributed the very existence of the Congress to England's providential mission, declaring that "the people of England were sincere in the declarations that India was a sacred charge entrusted to their care by Providence and that they were bound to administer it for the good of India, to the glory of their own name and the satisfaction of God."¹⁰ He stressed that Congressmen were "loyal to the backbone" to the British Government because they appreciated the benefits of English education which revealed to them that "kings are made for the people, not people for their kings"—a lesson which they have learnt "amidst the darkness of Asiatic despotism only by the light of English civilization."¹¹ Congressmen were so anxious to express their sincere gratitude and loyalty to the British Government that they spontaneously responded in chorus to Naoroji's exclamation "is this Congress a nursery for sedition and rebellion" with cries of "no", "no" and with "yes", "yes" to "is it another stone in the foundation and stability of the Government?"¹²

But while Congressmen believed that British rule in India was

⁹ B. C. Pal, *Indian Nationalism: Its Principles and Personalities*, p. 98.

¹⁰ *Report of the second I.N.C. Calcutta 1886*, p. 52.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 53. ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 52.

destined to accomplish its providential mission, they argued that the British Raj was "more Raj and less British" in the sense that it fulfilled the fundamental functions of Hindu kingship in preserving external and internal peace, but that it was reluctant to introduce English parliamentary institutions. The implicit faith of Congressmen in the efficacy of England's mission and their expectancy to benefit from its results was expressed by Madan Mohan Malaviya thus: "Representative institutions are as much a part of a true Briton as his language and his literature. Will . . . Great Britain deny us, her free born subjects, the first of these when by the gift of the two latter she has qualified us to appreciate and incited us to desire it."¹³ Throughout the second session, Congressmen complained that their admiration for England's representative institutions remained sterile because their aspirations to have a share in the government of their country were denied them by the very government which aroused these aspirations.

In 1883, Banerjea claimed¹⁴ that on the basis of Queen Victoria's Proclamation and her title "Empress of India", Indians were British subjects who constituted in India the responsible Opposition of Her Majesty to the Indian Civil Service, which proved in defeating the Ilbert Bill its defiance of the Proclamation. The Congress followed this theme. It endeavoured to justify its claims to benefit from the introduction of representative institutions, by insisting that the English-educated members of the Congress were British subjects who were entitled to the same rights of Englishmen in India and in England. Hence, the dual character of the Congress—a self-regarded replica of the British Parliament and, at the same time, a vehicle for the expression of the grievances of its members against the British Government of India. In other words, an organization which regarded itself as an unofficial parliamentary opposition to the Government of India, which was seeking at the same time to become an official part of the same government.

Supporting the resolution which urged the election of Indian representatives to the Legislative Councils as a step towards self-government, Banerjea declared: "It is not a question of the abdication of the Government, it is a question of the association of the

¹³ *Report of the second I.N.C. Calcutta 1886*, p. 107.

¹⁴ *Speeches*, Vol. II, pp. 42-43.

people in a partial and modified form in the Government of the country."¹⁵ He expressed his conviction that as long as India remained under British rule, the development of the principle of representation was assured, but cautioned that this development ought to be gradual.¹⁶

In its resolutions, the second Congress proposed that not less than one half of the members of the Legislative Councils should be elected. It suggested that the proposed Councillors would be elected by members of municipalities, district boards, chambers of commerce, and the universities, or "of all persons possessing such qualifications, educational and pecuniary, as may be deemed necessary."¹⁷ It is evident that Congressmen did not think in terms of universal franchise and that they excluded the non-English-educated and the masses.

Explaining the proposals of the Congress for the reform of the Legislative Councils at the twelfth annual meeting of the Indian Association in 1888, Banerjea asserted that the proposed Councillors could not be elected by "people unfit to exercise the franchise—the ignorant peasantry of the country."¹⁸

While the Indian Association tried in 1883 to enlist support of the masses in the villages of Bengal, the Congress was conceived as a safety valve¹⁹ to forestall a possible revolutionary outbreak and was primarily interested in establishing an image of respectability and loyalty. It dissociated itself from the masses and avoided any issues which might have either damaged its own loose frame of collective unity, or aroused hostile criticism from the Anglo-Indians or from the Government.

However, the first serious criticism and opposition to the Congress came from Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. Addressing a Muslim meeting in Lucknow on 28 December 1887—the day when the third Congress was convening in Madras—Sir Syed Ahmed Khan told his Muslim co-religionists to go and join the Congress in Madras if they were willing to let India groan under the yoke of a

¹⁵ *Report of the second I.N.C. Calcutta 1886*, p. 99.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

¹⁷ *Report of the second I.N.C. Calcutta 1886*, Resolution IV.

¹⁸ *Speeches*, Vol. III, p. 62, "The Present Political Situation", 26 July 1888.

¹⁹ W. Wedderburn, *Allan Octavian Hume, Father of the Indian National Congress*, London, 1913, p. 77. See Chapter III below.

future Hindu rule.²⁰ He argued that if the programme of the Congress would be implemented, the reformed Legislative Councils would inevitably have a majority of Hindus with hardly any Muslim representatives. He asserted that the Congress aimed to advance the exclusive interests of the Hindus, that it was an organization which was promoting civil war,²¹ and advised Muslims to hold themselves aloof from "this political uproar"—i.e. the Congress.²² The election of Badrudin Tyabji to the presidency of the third Congress, in December 1887 at Madras, was deliberately designed to demonstrate that the Congress was also representative of the Muslims. Tyabji stressed this point in his presidential address and declared that he was moved to preside over the session in order to encourage Muslims to co-operate with Hindus for their common benefit.²³

In this connection Banerjea wrote: "We were straining every nerve to secure the co-operation of our Mohamedan fellow-countrymen . . . we sometimes paid the fares of Mohamedan delegates and offered them other facilities."²⁴ Appealing to the Muslims to join the Congress, Banerjea argued before a Muslim meeting in Dacca²⁵ that even Sir Syed Ahmed Khan described India as a bride whose two eyes represented the Hindu and Muslim communities. Banerjea claimed that throughout the period of Muslim rule in India, Hindus and Muslims had lived as brothers who worked jointly for the advancement of the interests of their common country. He denied that the programme of the Congress sought to secure higher appointments in the Indian Civil Service exclusively for the Hindus, and attempted to refute the view that the Hindus would dominate the proposed reformed Legislative Councils. Assuring his Muslim listeners that they stood to gain from the Congress, Banerjea challenged them by arguing that if the Congress had any shortcomings they should better join it instead of criticizing it from the outside.

Attempting to act as an all-round mediator, Banerjea tried also

²⁰ *Speeches and letters of Syed Ahmed Khan*, Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1888. "On the present state of Indian Politics", I.O.L. Track 733.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27. ²² *Ibid.*, p. 52.

²³ *Report of the third I.N.C. Madras 1887*, p. 71.

²⁴ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 108.

²⁵ *Speeches*, Vol. III, p. 86, 1 October 1888.

to justify the programme of the Congress before Englishmen. In a public meeting of Englishmen and Indians held in Calcutta's Town Hall to protest against the annual migration of the Government to Simla, one of the speakers, Sir Alexander Wilson, proposed a resolution which condemned the annual transfer of the Government on the grounds that it entailed the waste of public time and money, and that the Government should be permanently located in Calcutta where it would be best able to act in the event of an internal emergency. Supporting this resolution Banerjea said that when the Mutiny broke out, the Commander-in-Chief was in Simla and before he could descend into the plains "the flames of the Mutiny had . . . enveloped the whole country in a dreadful conflagration."²⁶ He declared that had there been prompt action India "would have been spared the greatest catastrophe it has passed through in modern times."²⁷ In Banerjea's opinion the significance of the meeting was not merely in its protest against the annual transfer to Simla, but in its demonstration that the bitter memory of the Ilbert Bill controversy was forgotten. He appealed to Englishmen and Indians to share their "common interests" and to work in harmony for Indian political advancement and Indian representation.²⁸ The Ilbert Bill proved the hostility of the English community towards Indians' advancement. Banerjea's assumption that they would sympathize with the programme of the Congress was complete self-deception. In spite of Congressmen's profuse profession of loyalty to British rule, the Congress was bitterly attacked by Englishmen. In his *Essays on Indian Topics*, Theodore Beck, principal of Aligarh Muslim College, argued that the Congress would inevitably develop into a "deadly engine of sedition."²⁹ He accused Congressmen of using deceptive language in giving assurances that they only wanted the reform of the Legislative Councils when their main object was to have their own parliament. He warned the Government that if it would allow the Congress to spread its propaganda, the result would be "the massacre of Englishmen, their wives and children."³⁰ He argued that Congressmen's talk of constitutional

²⁶ *Speeches*, Vol. III, p. 17, "Exodus to the Hills", July 1886.

²⁷ *Ibid.* ²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

²⁹ Theodore Beck, *Essays on Indian Topics*, Pioneer Press, Allahabad 1888, "In what will it end?", p. 105.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

agitation when there was no constitution, was a perversion of language which would ultimately lead to mutiny and bloodshed.³¹

Sir John Strachey attacked the whole concept of the Indian National Congress by asserting that there was no such country as India, and that there were no Indians in the sense of a united people who were bound by racial, cultural or linguistic ties. Hence he claimed, there could be no Indian nation or any representation of Indian nationality.³² Like Theodore Beck, he accused the Congress of being a seditious organization which was veiled under expressions of loyalty, and contended that since the ignorant masses could not follow the intricate limitations of constitutional agitation, they would only be excited by the Congress to bring about a revolution.³³ In the same vein, a remarkable pamphlet bearing the name of its author as Oday Pertab Singh,³⁴ the Raja of Bhinga, argued that the so-called Indian National Congress could not pose as the spokesman of the Indian people as it neither represented the peasantry, nor the majority of the zamindars, nor the Muslims. The Congress, the pamphlet continued, was an organization of Anglicized Indians, pseudo-imitators of English institutions, who were out of touch with the masses. It further argued that British parliamentary democracy could function properly only in England and could not be transplanted to India, since there was no instance of popular government in Indian history, and the people of India were separated by profound racial, religious, and social divisions. It repeated the warning that unless the activities of the Congress were checked, the result would be revolution and massacre. The pamphlet urged the Government to cease its attempts to rule India on democratic principles since they were neither suitable to the country nor desired by the masses. It concluded by pointing out that "all that England could do for India is to give her wise and just governors and to let them govern," and that the Government should better rule the people through their "chosen and natural

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 117 and 119.

³² Sir John Strachey, *India*, London, 1888, p. 2; (also *Bengalee*, 22 December 1888).

³³ *Ibid.*, Appendix pp. 356, 357 and 377.

³⁴ *Democracy Not Suited to India*, 1888. It was written by Sir Auckland Colvin. See "India not for Indians" in Proceedings of Legislative Council of the Governor-General, 1887, *Dufferin Papers*, Vol. XVI, p. 163.

leaders" who were the true loyalists of the Government unlike the "flatulent orators and the seditious editors."

These arguments represented the general opinion of Englishmen on the Congress. Above all, the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, publicly dismissed Congressmen as a "microscopic minority" and expressed his opinion that the application of democratic methods of government or the adoption of a parliamentary system to India would be a "very big jump into the unknown."³⁵ Having been rebuffed in India, the Congress directed its main appeals to England. It was a basic assumption of Congressmen that in England, Englishmen were not only unbiased towards their aspirations, but that if Englishmen would realize the merit of the moderate requests of the Congress, they would support its programme. Congressmen identified their constitutional agitation with their reading of England's constitutional history. As zealous admirers of English parliamentary democracy, Congressmen believed that if they were to succeed in arousing the sympathies of the English electorate, Englishmen with their power of the vote would exert pressure on their elected representatives in Parliament, who in turn would press the Secretary of State to direct the Government of India to meet the political aspirations of the Indians. The majority of Congressmen were either lawyers or men who had studied law. Coupled with their belief that Englishmen were essentially adherents of fair play and justice, they regarded England as their High Court of appeal and complacently thought that if they were to put their case before the bar of English public opinion, Englishmen would be convinced of their just requests and support the Congress.

In addition, they strove to promote their cause by penetrating into English party politics. As early as 1879, Banerjea advocated the establishment of a permanent Indian agency in England. He then argued that Indians would gain full rights only if Indian questions became important factors in the programme of party politics in England.³⁶ In 1883, during the Ilbert Bill controversy, the Indian Association deputed Lal Mohan Ghosh to England to win Englishmen's support for the Bill, and he stood on behalf of the Liberals as a candidate for Parliament. He was not elected. In 1886, Dadabhai Naoroji also attempted as a Liberal candidate to

³⁵ Lord Dufferin, *Speeches Delivered in India*, November 1888, p. 239.

³⁶ *Speeches*, Vol. I, p. 166, "Deputation in England", 3 September 1879.

SOME OF ENGLAND'S PLEDGES TO INDIA.

Act of Parliament of 1833.

That no native of the said territories (India) nor any natural-born subject of His Majesty resident therein shall, by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office, or employment under the said Government (Act 3 and 4 Wm. IV., c. 85, s. 87, 1833.)

Her Majesty's Proclamation of 1858.

We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian Territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other Subjects; and those obligations, by the Blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil.

* * * *

And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our Subjects, of whatever Race or Creed, be freely and impartially admitted to Offices in our Service, the Duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity, duly to discharge.

Lord Northbrook, at Birmingham, on Indian Affairs.

"There is one simple test which we may apply to all Indian questions: let us never forget that it is our duty to govern India, not for our own profit and advantage, but for the benefit of the Natives of India."

Lord Lytton's Speech, at the Delhi Assemblage, on 1st January, 1877.

"But you, the Natives of India, whatever your race, and whatever your creed, have a recognised claim to share largely with your English fellow-subjects, according to your capacity for the task, in the administration of the country you inhabit. This claim is founded in the highest justice. It has been repeatedly affirmed by British and Indian statesmen, and by the legislation of the Imperial Parliament. It is recognised by the Government of India as binding on its honour, and consistent with all the aims of its policy."

Lord Ripon, in the Viceregal Legislative Council.

"The document (Her Majesty's Proclamation) is not a treaty, it is not a diplomatic instrument, it is a declaration of principles of Government which, if it is obligatory at all, is obligatory in respect to all to which it is addressed. The doctrine, therefore, to which Sir James Stephen has given the sanction of his authority, I feel bound to repudiate to the utmost of my power. It seems to me to be inconsistent with the character of my Sovereign and with the honour of my country, and if it were once to be received and acted upon by the Government of England, it would do more than anything else could possibly do to strike at the root of our power and to destroy our just influence. Because that power and that influence rests upon the conviction of our good faith more than upon any other foundation, ay, more than upon the valour of our soldiers and the reputation of our arms."

be elected to Parliament. Having failed, he began to act in 1887 as the representative agent of the Congress in London. W. C. Bonnerji joined him in 1888 and an Indian Political Agency was established in London with William Digby as its secretary. The agency circulated the Report of the third Congress which was prefaced with citations from the Act of Parliament of 1833, from Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858, and from speeches of Lord Northbrook, Lord Lytton, Lord Ripon and Lord Dufferin, under the heading "Some of England's Pledges to India".³⁷ This document prefaced all the reports of the Congress until 1908, when it was then replaced by the constitution of the Congress. It constituted the proof of the Congress for its arguments and resolutions which called for the redemption of these "pledges". A cover letter to the report of the third Congress, dated May 1888 and signed by W. C. Bonnerji, Dadabhai Naoroji and Badrudin Tyabji, as presidents of the three Congress sessions, explained that the resolutions of the third Congress showed that the Reform (of the Legislative Councils) which was called for by the "law abiding conduct of the people, will be striven for by constitutional means only", that the Indian people as a whole and their leaders in particular were loyally bound to the British Government and were convinced that the granting of their demands would increase the strength of the Government as it would add to the prosperity of the people. The cover letter claimed that the Report of the Congress proved, especially by its list of delegates, that the Congress represented the Indian people, not through self-elected delegates, but through representatives who were appointed either at open public meetings or by political and commercial associations. It further claimed, falsely, that "no party of India nor any section of its varied communities failed to have its appropriate representation." It implored the recipients of the Report to acquaint themselves with the state of their "Indian fellow subjects" and render the Congress their active support. This support, the authors of the letter explained, had in each vote of an English electorate more direct control over the destinies of India than the whole of India's 250 million subjects. The letter ended with the following plea: "We know that without your co-operation we are quite helpless. The only way to Indian Reform runs through the British Parliament."

³⁷ See the text of the Pledges on the facing page.

It is significant that the cover letter endeavoured to appeal to Englishmen by using the terms "Reform", "party representation", and "Indian Fellow subjects". In the introduction to the Report, the Congress alluded to itself as "the soundest triumph of British administration and the crown of glory to the British nation." In support of the proposed reform of the Legislative Councils, Banerjea's declaration read: "To England we may appeal with confidence. When Italy was struggling for liberty, England stretched the right hand of sympathy. When Greece was endeavouring to assert her right place among the nations, England was there, the foster mother of freedom responsive to the call. We are not Italians or Greeks. We are something better. We are British subjects."³⁸ The main purpose of the Report of the Congress was thus intended to serve as a manifesto of loyalty and moderation in an appeal to its prospective English readers.

While the Congress requested the reform of the Legislative Councils as a right based on England's pledges, it demanded the enlistment of Indians to the Volunteer Corps as a duty to qualify for equal citizenship. Yet this was belittled by the assertion that "the *raison d'être* of English volunteers in India was the protection of the European community in times of trouble against the attacks of the ill disposed portion of the natives."³⁹

Speaking in Calcutta on 26 July 1888, Banerjea declared: "Deep and unswerving loyalty to the British Crown and constitutional agitation for our rights are the words which are graven on the heart of every Indian patriot."⁴⁰ Banerjea had no difficulty in reconciling the loyalty of Indians to England with Indian patriotism, and explained: "We are loyal and we are patriotic. We are loyal because we are patriotic, because we know and firmly believe that through the British Government and the British Government alone, can we hope to obtain those cherished political rights which English education and English influences taught us to hanker after."⁴¹ His typical declaration, "God grant that the future may deepen our loyalty, stimulate our patriotism and consolidate our imperial con-

³⁸ *Report of the third I.N.C. Madras 1887*, p. 86.

³⁹ Sir Lepel Griffin, "Indian Volunteers and Indian loyalty", *The Asiatic Quarterly Review*, January-April 1889, p. 9.

⁴⁰ *Speeches*, Vol. III, p. 65, July 1888.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 85, October 1888.

nection with England,"⁴² expressed his sincere conviction that Indian patriotism, loyalty to England and the consolidation of British rule were essentially complementary to each other.

In reply to the critics of the Congress and especially to Theodore Beck's "In what will it end?", A. O. Hume wrote: "We look forward to a time, say fifty or seventy years hence, when the government of India will be precisely similar to that of the Dominion of Canada, when each province and presidency will have its local parliament for provincial affairs and the whole country will have its Dominion Parliament for national affairs and when the only official sent out to India from England will be the Viceroy."⁴³

While this bold assertion of Hume expressed in 1888 the envisaged goal of the Congress, the Congress answered its critics in its fourth session by less forthright arguments.

The fourth Congress held in December 1888 at Allahabad, deliberately chose George Yule to act as its first English president in order to curry favour with the English critics of the Congress, just as Badrudin Tyabji was chosen in 1887 to conciliate with the Muslims. The keynote of the fourth Congress was its attempt to appease its critics and to manifest more emphatically its complete loyalty to British rule. Supporting the resolution which again urged the reform of the Legislative Councils, Banerjea declared in the name of the Congress that it sought "neither a parliamentary system, nor representative government, nor the application of democratic methods to Indian institutions."⁴⁴ (This apologetic modification was in complete contrast to Banerjea's declaration made a year earlier in the Madras session of the Congress, when he declared in support of the same resolution: "We unfurl the banner of the Congress and upon it are written in characters of glittering gold which none may efface, the great words of 'Representative institutions for India'.")⁴⁵ He argued that the sole object of the Congress was the reform of the Legislative Councils through which the Government would be better able to consult Indian opinion on its administrative measures. Referring to the charge that Congressmen were seditionists, Banerjea rhetorically asked, "Is it for one

⁴² *Report of the fourth I.N.C. Allahabad 1888*, p. 82.

⁴³ *Indian Mirror*, 23 May 1888.

⁴⁴ *Report of the fourth I.N.C. Allahabad 1888*, p. 29.

⁴⁵ *Report of the third I.N.C. Madras 1887*, p. 83.

moment to be suggested that we have become so idiotic and have taken such utter leave of our senses as not to see that we owe all that we possess—our position and our prestige—to the English connection? Let that connection come to an end, and we lose with it all that we hold most dear in life.”⁴⁶ To give wider currency to this newly modified theme with the intention of appeasing the critics of the Congress, and with an eye on the English public in England, the *Bengalee* echoed Banerjea’s speech in the fourth Congress and wrote: “It is not Home Rule or Parliamentary institutions that we want. Our humble prayer is that we should be associated with our rulers and only in a limited measure in the government of the country.”⁴⁷

In July 1889, the Indian Political Agency in London developed into the British Committee of the Indian National Congress under the chairmanship of William Wedderburn. Its members included W. C. Caine, Dadabhai Naoroji, E. Norton, and Charles Bradlaugh, with William Digby as its secretary. The British Committee of the Congress published a journal, *India*, which was distributed free of charge to political associations, and to Members of Parliament in a bid for their support.

In connection with the propaganda of the Congress in London and in order to further disarm the critics of the Congress, the fifth Congress, held in Bombay in 1889, selected William Wedderburn as its president. In his review of the development of the Congress, W. Wedderburn alluded to the policy of Lord Ripon which, he opined, led to the recognition that the British Government of India was not an alien Government. He recalled the demonstrations at the time of Ripon’s departure and expressed his belief that they proved, by popular declaration, that British rule could be accepted as the national government of the Indian people. Congressmen acclaimed this pronouncement with “long and enthusiastic cheers.”⁴⁸ Referring to the prospects of the Congress in England, he affirmed that the success of the Congress depended entirely upon the degree to which the British public would be induced to exert their influence on Indian affairs.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ *Report of the fourth I.N.C. Allahabad 1888*, p. 80.

⁴⁷ *Bengalee*, 8 January 1889.

⁴⁸ *Report of the fifth I.N.C. Bombay 1889*, p. 5.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

The fifth Congress appointed Pherozechah Mehta, Surendranath Banerjea, Man Mohan Ghosh and W. C. Bonnerji to propagate the programme of the Congress in England. Referring to their appointment, Banerjea described the nature and importance of the delegation in the following glowing terms: "I think this will be the realization of one of the grandest ideals that ever flashed across the minds of any patriot or philanthropist; India standing before the bar of English public opinion, and there through her accredited delegates chosen by the representatives of the nation, pleading her cause and demanding redress of her grievances; no finer, no nobler, no grander spectacle has ever been presented to the gaze of mankind."⁵⁰ In a farewell dinner given in honour of Banerjea's departure to England, W. C. Bonnerji stressed the importance of the mission in these terms: "From the government of this country we have little if any hope of emancipation. It is to England the land of political freedom . . . that we must turn if our political aspirations are ever to be realised."⁵¹ Referring to Banerjea's zealous work for the Congress, he remarked that it was fortunate for India that Banerjea's career as a civil servant came to an abrupt end because otherwise he would have been "a bright and shining light in the Civil Service."⁵²

In England, Banerjea delivered a series of speeches at public meetings, which were organized by the British Committee of the Congress, in which he harped on the theme of England's mission in India. He explained that by the introduction of English education and Western principles of government, British rule had saved India from her traditional system of mis-government and from the religious domination of her priestly class. But he argued that as an inevitable result the Universities in India were turning out annually thousands of Indian students who were steeped in English literature and Western political ideas, and were craving for English political institutions in which they expected to participate on the basis of equality of merit. He further argued that in spite of the pledges given in the Queen's Proclamation, Indians were discriminated against and had no representation in the government. In his attempt to describe the Congress in terms which would best appeal to Englishmen, he claimed that the Congress was a national

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 77. ⁵¹ *Bengalee*, 22 March 1890.

⁵² *Ibid.*

political organization and wrongly contended that its delegates were elected in the same manner as were the members of Parliament.⁵³ He categorically asserted that the Congress did not want Home Rule or parliamentary institutions in India, but added at the same time that it was inevitable that English-educated Indians aspired to have the "free institutions of England."⁵⁴ The denial of parliamentary institutions for India was designed to appease Englishmen's apprehensions that the Congress did not aim at Home Rule of the Irish pattern. But as it has been shown, the Congress identified itself right from its inception with the English parliament which it constantly held as its model. Thus, it was only as a result of wishing to reconcile with its critics that Banerjea diplomatically emphasized that the Congress did not want parliamentary institutions for India while in fact, he and other Congressmen constantly treasured the hope that this goal would be reached by gradual stages. Banerjea further argued, in his speeches in England, that Englishmen and Indians belonged to the same Aryan race and appealed to Englishmen to support the aspirations of their fellow Indians by exercising their power of the vote in favour of the Liberals.

Towards the end of their stay in England, the Indian deputation succeeded in securing an interview with Gladstone and asked him to support the Congress proposals to reform the Legislative Councils. The deputation thus attempted to involve English home politics with the demand for Indian representation in the Government of India.

On his return to India in July 1890, Banerjea was received with enhanced honour and was acclaimed for his successful mission in England. He reported that the British public sympathized with the aspirations of Indians and approved the constitutional character of the Congress.⁵⁵ He described how the Indian speakers put the case for the reform of the Legislative Councils and complacently claimed that their moderate request "went straight home to the heart" of the English audiences.⁵⁶ Although the English Press generally commented in favourable terms on the propaganda campaign of the Congress deputation, and in particular praised Banerjea's oratory, Banerjea was misled in believing that the deputation scored a

⁵³ *Speeches*, Vol. III, p. 124, April 1890.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

success. He was over-zealously impressed by the courtesy and sympathetic hearing of English audiences, especially as it contrasted with Englishmen's behaviour in India, with the result that he confused this courtesy with a pledge of active support. He exaggerated the importance of the public meetings which were merely social entertainment, and took them too seriously as political party meetings. The cheers and applause which were accorded the Indian speakers were expressions of surprised admiration for their fluent English rather than signs of support.⁵⁷ In contrast to the uncommitted reaction of the English audiences, J. M. Maclean, M.P., suggested that the Government should prohibit all Congress meetings and frankly asserted: "Let us have the courage to repudiate the pretence . . . that we keep India merely for the benefit of the people of the country and in order to train them for self-government. We keep it for the sake of the interests and the honour of England and the only form of government by which we can continue to hold it in subjection is that of despotism."⁵⁸ Sir Lepel Griffin wrote: "The ultimate ratio in India is *force*." He claimed that no Viceroy had done India more lasting injury than Lord Ripon who "excited unreasonable hopes and dangerous passions by ill considered promises which he was unable to fulfil . . . and bequeathed to his successors the impossible task of persuading the peoples to accept cheerfully the very little which statesmanship could offer them."⁵⁹

However on the basis of their self-acclaimed success, Banerjea urged that an Indian deputation should be sent to England every year; that the work of the British Committee of the Congress should be given greater financial support to open more branch agencies in England; and that paid delegates should be employed to keep up the interest of Englishmen in Indian affairs.⁶⁰

While Banerjea was congratulated by Congressmen on his success, the vernacular press took a different view of his mission and on the usefulness of the propaganda of the Congress in England.

⁵⁷ *Modern Review*, December 1909, "The Agitation of Indian Grievances in England", p. 288.

⁵⁸ *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, April 1889, "The Home Rule Movement in India", p. 437.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, "Indian Volunteers and Indian Loyalty", pp. 7 and 9.

⁶⁰ *Speeches*, Vol. III, p. 228. Also Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 117.

The *Dacca Prakash*⁶¹ wrote that the money spent on the Indian Political Agency in London was a sheer waste, and that it should have better been spent to improve the condition of the Indian masses. The article further criticized the Congress for not having passed any resolution which aimed to discourage the use of English manufactured goods or to promote the growth of indigenous cloth. (In the second session of the Congress, a delegate from the Punjab—Lala Hukam Chand—suggested that Indians should compete with English manufactured goods by supporting Indian artisans and by buying Indian made goods. His proposal was dismissed).⁶² The *Soma Prakash* criticized Banerjea for “making too much fuss” over his mission in England where he had claimed to be the representative of the 250 million Indian people, while in fact he had lost touch with the Indian masses.⁶³ But these observations were ignored by Congressmen.

It is evident that in the preparations for the sixth Congress in 1890, Congressmen again deliberately sought to have an Englishman to preside over the session. Herbert Gladstone, M.P., was first invited.⁶⁴ When he declined, the offer went to W. Gantz, the president of the Madras Anglo-Indian and Eurasian Association, who also declined.⁶⁵ Hence, just before the Congress was about to convene, Pherozeshah Mehta was hastily selected and elected president. In his presidential speech, Mehta expressed satisfaction that the Congress had passed its initial stage of trial and had succeeded in proving its moderation, loyalty and constitutional character. But he admitted that so far the recommendations of the Congress had failed to gain acceptance. He referred to Lord Salisbury's pronouncement that the concepts of election or representative government could not be applied to Eastern societies, but encouraged Congressmen to continue with their efforts by drawing sustenance from Charles Bradlaugh's Bill in Parliament which proposed the reform of the Indian Legislative Councils.⁶⁶

Lal Mohan Ghosh reaffirmed the Congress' creed in declaring:

⁶¹ B.N.N.R. *Dacca Prakash*, 12 January 1890.

⁶² *Report of the second I.N.C. Calcutta* 1886, p. 68.

⁶³ B.N.N.R. *Soma Prakash*, 15 September 1890.

⁶⁴ *Bengalee*, 8 November 1890.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 6 December 1890.

⁶⁶ *Report of the sixth I.N.C. Calcutta* 1890, p. 8.

"Our motto is reform not revolution."⁶⁷ Alluding to the success of the Indian deputation in England he deduced that British public opinion was on their side and pressed the need to convince Parliament that the moderate reforms which the Congress advocated, were only calculated to improve the administration of the Government of India in order to strengthen its foundation on the people's affection. This theme expressed the constant refrain of the Congress, but the novelty of the sixth Congress was in the proposal to hold the 1892 session in London. In suggesting this measure, Narendranath Sen contended that the real centre of the Indian government was not in Calcutta or in Simla, but in London. He argued that an assembly of the Congress in London would create a greater impression in England than the combined effect of the former five Congresses put together. He expressed Congressmen's feeling of despondency in his conclusion that hitherto they were "crying in the wilderness" and emphasized that the remedy was to be found only by sending one hundred Congressmen to hold a session in London.⁶⁸

This theme was the keynote of the seventh Congress, held in 1891 in Nagpur. Its deliberations conveyed an unmistakable feeling of despondency. The death of Charles Bradlaugh was a heavy loss to the agitation of the Congress in Parliament, and cast a shadow over the Nagpur session. The announcement of Hume's retirement was a sad surprise. An account of Hume's resignation from his office of General Secretary of the Congress attributes to him the following statement: "If the session be not held in London, my resignation be accepted. It is desirable that the session should not be held in India for some time to come."⁶⁹

The Congress had passed its resolutions during the past seven years of its existence and failed to achieve practical success. The only progress which the Congress did make was in proving that it was not a seditious organization, and that it was loyal to British rule. In other words it proved to the Government of India that it would do it no harm, and was therefore practically ignored. In fact, by 1891 the Congress was in a stalemate. It was for this reason that the session at Nagpur contemplated moving its centre of operation to London. Urging this measure as a last resort,

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15. ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁶⁹ Hamendranath Das Gupta, *The Indian National Congress*, p. 220.

Banerjea asked: "Shall the Congress exist as it has existed in the past, or shall it pronounce its doom?"⁷⁰ Ananda Charlu, the president of the session, explained that on the basis of the experience gained by the delegation of the Congress to England, it was thought best to transfer the venue of the next Congress to London "with the Congress banner over our heads emblazoned with the figure of the Union Jack."⁷¹ Apart from the heavy financial expense which was to be involved in holding a session in London, a serious obstacle existed in the fear that a journey across the sea, tabooed by Hindu religion, would result in the social ostracism of all Congressmen who would go to England. Encouraging Congressmen to rise above the fear of their possible ostracism, Ananda Charlu, himself a Brahman, declared: "There is already the beginning of a Congress-caste" and any social boycott "would only tend to cement that caste more closely together."⁷² The significance of this declaration lies in its being an admission that the Congress developed into an exclusive group of English-educated Indians who held themselves aloof from non-Congress Indians: an isolated intellectual political group which was far from being a spearhead of a national mass movement. Speaking about the Indian masses, Ananda Charlu told Congressmen they should arouse the national consciousness of the masses by imparting the conviction that they should cease to regard British rule as foreign, and "ask them to look upon our British rulers . . . as taking the place once held by the Kshatria and as being therefore part and parcel of the traditional administration" of India.

Banerjea's speech in the seventh Congress ended with the warning that the political existence of the Congress and the possibility of its future advancement might depend on the implementation of the resolution to hold the next session in London. But in view of the impending general elections in England, the Congress resolved to postpone the proposed London session until the general elections were over.

Throughout the year 1892 a general feeling of despondency prevailed over the fruitless inactivity of the Congress. The *Bengalee* published a letter from Hume which read: "Let the sullenness and discontent that broods over so large a population be replaced by

⁷⁰ *Report of the seventh I.N.C. Nagpur 1891*, p. 11.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7. ⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

hope and cheerful patience.”⁷³ Hume admitted in his letter that he had “almost begun to despair” and suggested that the meeting of the next Congress should be postponed until the end of the general elections in England which he hoped would return the Liberals. Only under such circumstances, he advised, could the Congress successfully hold its session in London. Throughout the year the *Bengalee* continued to publish articles which tried to explain that sea voyage to London would not result in the loss of caste.

The vernacular newspapers again attacked Banerjea and the Congress. The *Bhangavasi* attributed the failure of the Congress to gain any practical success to the fact that its members lacked earnestness and were primarily interested in enhancing their personal prestige.⁷⁴

The *Bhangavasi* wrote that the Congress had dissipated the energy of India’s struggle for political advancement. If Congressmen really wanted to convince India’s rulers, the article argued, “they should stop talking and take to action”, which would at least prove their readiness to make sacrifice for the mother country.⁷⁵ The *Bhangavasi* also attacked Banerjea for falsely posing as a patriot when in fact he remained the same Sahib that he was before his dismissal from the Indian Civil Service forced him to take up the role of a patriot.⁷⁶ The *Maratha* attacked the Congress for having stifled the life of India’s political activity by holding its short meetings once a year, and suggested a wider and permanent political organization which would function throughout the year.⁷⁷

The resignation of William Digby from the British Committee of the Congress was another blow to Congressmen, although Hume attempted to calm Congressmen by writing⁷⁸ that Digby’s resignation was not to be regretted because he had drawn £500 a year for acting as secretary, £100 a year for editing *India*, over £100 for partial use of his office and over £200 for the services of his employees. However, just when the outlook appeared gloomy for Congressmen, their hopes were boosted by two events—the victory

⁷³ *Bengalee*, 18 June 1892. ⁷⁴ B.N.N.R. *Bhangavasi*, 1 January 1892.

⁷⁵ B.N.N.R. *Bhangavasi*, 16 January 1892. ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 12 March 1892.

⁷⁷ *Maratha*, 29 December 1892. ⁷⁸ *Bengalee*, 3 December 1892.

of the Liberals at the general elections and the election of Dadabhai Naoroji to the House of Commons.

At the eighth session of the Congress held in December 1892 in Allahabad, Banerjea declared: "We appeal to Mr. Gladstone and to the illustrious leaders of the Liberal party for the application of the elective principle to the councils and I am sure that we will not appeal in vain."⁷⁹ In his presidential address, W. C. Bonnerji reviewed the history of the Congress and confidently said that since he inaugurated the Congress in 1885, it had completed its first successful cycle and was about to begin a new and more promising one. Referring to Hume's absence, he acknowledged the debt which the Congress owed to Hume, but encouraged Congressmen not to feel disheartened by Hume's departure since the Congress, he declared, had outgrown its dependence on one individual and rested on the general influential forces of British rule and English education which were constantly animating its deliberations.⁸⁰ Alluding to Dadabhai Naoroji's election to Parliament, W. C. Bonnerji thanked the constituency of Central Finsbury for having elected Naoroji and added that by having done so, they have also elected a representative for the people of India in the House of Commons.⁸¹ The main theme of W. C. Bonnerji's presidential speech centred on the hope that the political change in England would accelerate the reform of the Legislative Councils. For the first time in the deliberation of the Congress, Bonnerji asserted that the Congress wanted "responsible government" for India. But it should be immediately added, as Bonnerji did, that he used this concept in the sense that the Government of India would be responsible to Parliament.⁸²

In 1893 an Indian Parliamentary Committee was established with William Wedderburn as Chairman, and Herbert Roberts as secretary. Dadabhai Naoroji's election to Parliament strengthened Congressmen's belief that their tactics should centre on party politics in England with more Indian members in the House of Commons. A letter from Hume read: "By all means send young men too, if W. C. Bonnerji, Man Mohan Ghosh, Surendranath Banerjea and Pherozeshah Mehta chose to come over and work for a con-

⁷⁹ *Report of the eighth I.N.C. Allahabad 1892*, p. 30.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁸² *Ibid.*

stituency as Dadabhai did, they would very likely get it and be an invaluable additional strength to the Indian party."⁸³

In 1892, Parliament passed the Indian Councils Act which empowered the Viceroy to make regulations for the nomination of non-official members to the Central and Provincial Legislative Councils. The selection of Indian members was arrived at through their election by municipal and district boards, the universities, chambers of commerce, and landholders' association. The Government of India accepted the recommended elected representatives and then nominated them members of the Councils.⁸⁴

In April 1893, Banerjea was elected as the representative of the Calcutta municipal corporation for nomination to the Bengal Legislative Council. In proposing Banerjea to represent the municipal corporation, Narendranath Sen attributed to him the leading part in the agitation which had brought the partial reform of the Legislative Councils.⁸⁵

The *Statesman* wrote that the new representation in the Councils was largely due to Banerjea's efforts and that it was fitting that he should have been the first Indian to be elected for their nomination.⁸⁶ *New India* commented that "the tribune of the people" will no longer cry in the wilderness. The *Advocate* of Lucknow, the *Hindu* of Madras and the *Maratha* also congratulated Banerjea on his election and acknowledged his well deserved success.⁸⁷ *India* of London forecast that he would proceed to be elected to the Imperial Legislative Council and in time to the House of Commons.⁸⁸ The *Pioneer* wrote a biographical sketch of Banerjea in which it observed that he was justly regarded by the majority of Indians as the life and soul of the movement which culminated in the Indian National Congress. Referring to Banerjea's chequered career, the article noted his successful entry into the Indian Civil Service and his expulsion from it, and his success in raising the standard of the *Bengalee* to one of the foremost

⁸³ *Bengalee*, 3 November 1894.

⁸⁴ The de-facto quasi election system which emanated from the Indian Councils Act of 1892 is discussed in Reginald Coupland, *India: A Re-statement*, pp. 100-103; and C. H. Philips, *India*, London, 1948, p. 102.

⁸⁵ *Bengalee*, 15 April 1893, and Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 125.

⁸⁶ *Statesman*, 15 April 1893.

⁸⁷ *Bengalee*, 22 April 1893.

⁸⁸ In *Speeches*, Vol. IV, Appendix I, p. 117.

weeklies of India. As a politician, the article continued, Banerjea lacked tact and practical wisdom in having no faith in the Government of India, but abundant trust in the justice and generosity of the British people. This conviction led to Banerjea's participation in the Congress deputation to England in 1890 in which he made an uncommonly good impression on the English working class; yet, an impression which "faded like all impressions created by foreigners in England." The article concluded by acknowledging the fact that public opinion owed its existence in Bengal to Babu Surendranath Banerjea.⁸⁹

The ninth session of the Congress, held in December 1893 in Lahore, met under the glow of the partial reform of the Legislative Councils and was presided over by Dadabhai Naoroji, M.P. Banerjea summed up the atmosphere of the ninth Congress by forecasting that the year 1893 will be memorable in the annals of English history for witnessing the birth of representative institutions in India. He concluded: "The past fills us with hope. Our record has been a brilliant one . . . as in the past so in the future our hopes will be centred in the House of Commons."⁹⁰

In his presidential speech Dadabhai Naoroji told Congressmen that their efforts succeeded in enlisting the support of Englishmen in England, and that if this had been their only success it amply justified the work of the Congress. He encouraged them to maintain their perseverance by comparing their struggle to the agitation in England against the Corn Laws and the struggle for Parliamentary Reforms. He reaffirmed that the struggle of the Congress had to be continued in England through the British Committee of the Congress. He concluded by urging Congressmen to hold a session in London and assured them that their implicit faith in the justice and fairness of the English people together with their loyalty to British rule and patriotism to India would result in the acceptance of their demands.

On 27 January 1894 the *Bengalee* published the speech of the Viceroy, Lord Landsdowne, in which he dismissed Congressmen as superficially educated men who entertained "vague aspirations and ambitions". This rebuke further strengthened Congressmen's belief that they could expect no favourable response from the

⁸⁹ In *Speeches*, Vol. IV, Appendix II, pp. 117-22.

⁹⁰ *Report of the ninth I.N.C. Lahore 1893*, p. 75.

Government of India and that the main impulse for reforms would have to come from England.

The following incident which occurred in June 1894 illustrates Congressmen's sensitiveness to their constitutional agitation. On 2 June the *Bengalee* and other newspapers reported that four trees in a maidan of Calcutta were found smeared with cow-dung. The *Englishman* associated this unusual event with the agitation for the preservation of cows which, a year earlier, had caused serious riots between Hindus and Muslims in Bombay. The Lieutenant-Governor of Bombay, Lord Harris, reported that in his opinion the agitation for the preservation of cows was indirectly connected with the Congress, and that it would be used as a lever not only against the Muslims but also against the Government.⁹¹ The *Englishman* compared the smearing of the trees with cow-dung, with the circulation of the chapaties before the outbreak of the Mutiny and advised the Government to take precautions against a Hindu militant revival.⁹² Banerjea editorialized in the *Bengalee* on "The smearing incident and the cause of Indian progress" and implored that the Congress was doing its best to strengthen its hard won reputation of loyalty to British rule; that the degree to which the Congress succeeded in advancing the political status of Indians depended on the extent to which the Congress would gain the support of the British public in England; that the Congress had succeeded in forming the Indian Parliamentary Committee whose prospects of rendering help depended on the enlargement of its membership, but if the British public were to have the slightest apprehension that the conduct of any section of the Indian people was unconstitutional, members of Parliament would refuse to support any further reform for India.⁹³ Three days later the *Bengalee* wrote that it had learnt from the *Englishman* that the trees were smeared by a Mohamedan who confessed that he had merely done so in order "to keep them cool and assist the growth of their berries."

⁹¹ S. A. Wolpert, *Tilak and Gokhale*, University of California Press, 1962, p. 66. Quoting his source, Lord Harris to Secretary of State, Lord Kimberly, *Kimberly Papers* PC/E/16 Public Record Office, 31 August 1893.

⁹² *Englishman*, 2 June 1894.

⁹³ *Bengalee*, 16 June 1894.

The following report of an interview with Banerjea further illustrates the importance which Congressmen attached to the necessity of obtaining the support of Englishmen in England. In explaining the character and goal of the Congress, he emphasized that it sought only a partial share in the administration of the government and said: "We Hindus have more to lose by the disruption of the Empire than any other portion of its community. The National Congress as a crude non-official Parliament would keep alive the feeling of loyalty. We want to be associated *with* our rulers not to supersede them . . . we want you English here, we cannot do without you; and when silly English Radicals who know nothing about the matter tell the masses in Hyde Park that we wish you out of the country, they lie. We have a great reverence for our own traditions leavened by English feelings. We want to combine our ancient good with your good. All we ask for is sympathy, sympathy, sympathy."⁹⁴

For its next session, the Congress again sought to select its president from England. The offer first went to E. Blake, M.P., and when he declined, Michael Davitt, an Irish M.P., was invited, but he also declined.⁹⁵ Alfred Webb, Irish M.P. and a member of the Indian Parliamentary Committee was then invited and agreed to preside. In justifying this selection, the *Bengalee* repeated the refrain that the Indian political arena was Parliament.⁹⁶

However, Congressmen's fundamental belief in the ability of Parliament to grant their requests suffered a severe blow in connection with the question of Simultaneous Examinations. The 1876 Regulation lowered the maximum age limit from 21 to 19 years for candidates to the competitive examination for the Indian Civil Service, and made it almost impossible for Indian candidates to compete successfully with English candidates.⁹⁷ In 1888, the age limit was raised from 19 to 23 but the holding of the examinations in London seriously hampered the prospects

⁹⁴ *Bengalee*, 3 November 1894. The interviewer, Raymond Blathwayt, described Banerjea as "clever, having all the popular orator's love of phrases, pompous, and possessing great sense of self appreciation."

⁹⁵ *Bengalee*, 17 November 1894. ⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ During 1862-78 the total number of successful Indian candidates was eleven; less than one a year. During 1879-86 the rate of recruitment was on an average six a year. Hira Lal Singh, *Problems and Policies of the British in India*, p. 33.

of Indian competitors. From its first session in 1885 and throughout its following sessions the Congress constantly urged that the examinations should be held simultaneously in England and in India. On 2 June 1893, Herbert Paul M.P., secretary of the Indian Parliamentary Committee, moved in the House of Commons a resolution which proposed that the competitive examinations should be held simultaneously in England and in India. Dadabhai Naoroji supported the resolution and it was carried by 84 to 76 votes. The Under Secretary of State for India, George Russel, and the Secretary of State for India, Lord Kimberly, viewed the resolution as a "fatal mistake".⁹⁸ Kimberly held that the resolution was carried by a snatch vote and invited the opinion of the Government of India. The Government of India replied that the application of simultaneous examinations was "an ill advised and dangerous" proposal.⁹⁹ The Secretary of State endorsed this opinion and the question of simultaneous examinations was dismissed.

The outcome of the Ilbert Bill proved that in as much as there was any practical policy for the participation of Indians in the government of India, it was hampered by the influence of official and non-official Englishmen in India. The Ilbert Bill was defeated in spite of the best possible combination of a Liberal government headed by Gladstone in England and Ripon as Viceroy in India. Nevertheless, the Congress, as noted above, adhered to the belief that the main impulse of reforms would come from Parliament. Yet, although the Liberals were again in power and even though Parliament passed the resolution in favour of holding simultaneous examinations, the resolution was overruled by the Secretary of State for India and by the Government of India—thus proving that Parliament had no effective control over Indian affairs.

The *Bhangavasi* expressed the general reaction of the vernacular press when it wrote that British rule in India had been "unmasked" and advised Congressmen to get rid of their illusions.¹⁰⁰

On the other hand, Hume again appealed to Congressmen not to become disheartened and explained that the overriding of the resolution of Parliament was a rebuff "one had to expect and

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 64. ⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁰⁰ B.N.N.R. *Bhangavasi*, 1 September 1894.

accept cheerfully in practical politics.”¹⁰¹ Banerjea upheld this view in the 1894 Madras Congress and said: “We meet today under the shadow of great disappointment, but we need not despair. Our Sovereign declared that we are to be free; that we are to be eligible to the highest offices of the state; Parliament has endorsed the mandate and we shall see to it that no Minister of the Crown however highly placed he may be, that no government however influential it may be, is permitted to nullify the gracious pledges of our Sovereign and the authoritative declaration of Parliament.”¹⁰² As if to give sanction to this assertion, the whole audience in the Congress hall stood up while Banerjea recited the Queen’s Proclamation. Banerjea called for a protest against the overriding of Parliament’s resolution on simultaneous examinations and urged Congressmen to organize a petition of a million signatures to the House of Commons, thus fastening again on Parliament.

Reviewing the Madras session, the *Bengalee* wrote that it had proved an “unqualified success” in demonstrating the enthusiasm of Congressmen. The article thanked the Reception Committee of Madras for its hospitality and acclaimed its “splendid arrangements” for the delegates.¹⁰³ The petition to Parliament, however, proved of no avail.

It is evident that although the faith of the Congress in Parliament sustained a severe blow, Banerjea and Congressmen were not discouraged but congratulated themselves on the success of their Congress session, and were satisfied with the social aspects of the occasion.

On his return from Madras to Calcutta on board s.s. Rewa, Banerjea addressed the English passengers on the programme of the Congress, and frankly explained that Congressmen could only be loyal, because he said: “We have everything to lose, nothing to gain by the severance of our connection with England. We owe whatever position or prestige we have acquired to our English education and culture. If you were to leave the country our English education and culture would be at a discount. We are not particularly anxious to commit political suicide.”¹⁰⁴ At a

¹⁰¹ *Bengalee*, 22 December 1894.

¹⁰² *Report of the tenth I.N.C. Madras 1894*, pp. 80-81.

¹⁰³ *Bengalee*, 5 January 1895. ¹⁰⁴ *Speeches*, Vol. V. p. 104, January 1895.

private meeting of leading Congressmen, held in March 1895, in honour of Pherozeshah Mehta, Banerjea reaffirmed his belief in the providential mission of England in India and said: "I am not credited with being particularly loyal to the British connection. It is an obloquy which has haunted me through life. I am loyal because I am patriotic, because I feel in my heart of hearts that with the continuance and indeed the permanence of British rule in India are bound up the best prospects of Indian advancement."¹⁰⁵

Commenting on the reception given in London to Alfred Webb, president of the 1894 Congress session, in which one of the speakers, A. C. Morton, expressed the hope that the efforts of the Congress would culminate in achieving Home Rule, Banerjea wrote in the *Bengalee* that the goal of the Congress was not Home Rule but a transformation of India into an organic part of a federated British Empire.¹⁰⁶

In May 1895, Banerjea was re-elected representative of the Calcutta municipal corporation for nomination to the Bengal Legislative Council.¹⁰⁷

In November 1895, Banerjea was selected president for the approaching eleventh session of the Congress. Reactions to his selection alluded to him in terms of "the tribune of the people", "the father of political agitation in India", and "one of the few Indians whose name is a household word throughout India."¹⁰⁸

In his presidential speech, Banerjea summed up the ideology which permeated the programme of moderate Congressmen in the following declarations: "We Congressmen know what we are about, we know our minds, we know our methods, we stick to them with resolute tenacity of purpose and faith. . . . We are advocates of reform and not of revolution, and reform as a safeguard against revolution. Above all, we rely with unbounded confidence on the justice and generosity of the British people and their representatives in Parliament. Our voice would be that of one crying in the wilderness but for our organization in London, the British Committee, our paper *India* and our Parliamentary

¹⁰⁵ *Bengalee*, 30 March 1895.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 15 June 1895. ¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 25 May 1895.

¹⁰⁸ *Observer* of Kanpur and *Gujarati* of Bombay—*Bengalee*, 16 and 30 November 1895.

Committee. The money that we spend in England is worth its weight in gold. . . . To England we look for inspiration and guidance. To England we look for sympathy in the struggle. England is our political guide and our moral preceptor. . . . English history has taught us those principles of freedom which we cherish with our lifehood. . . . We have been taught to admire the eloquence and genius of the great masters of English political philosophy. We have been brought face to face with the struggles and the triumphs of the English people in their progress towards constitutional freedom. . . . We did not seek to transplant into our country the spirit of those free institutions . . . it is the work of Englishmen. In this Congress from year to year we ask England to accomplish her glorious work. . . . In our efforts for the improvement of our political status we feel that we may appeal with confidence to the sympathies of the Anglo-Indian community. They are Englishmen. By instinct and tradition they are the friends of freedom. Our interests and their interests are identical . . . any extension of our political privileges would benefit them as well as ourselves. . . . Time is with us. Time, present and future is our ally . . . it is this feeling which reconciles us to the present. . . . It implies confidence in the progressive character of British rule. . . . We appeal to England gradually to change the character of her rule in India, to liberalize it, to adopt it to the newly developed environments of the country and the people, so that in the fulness of time India may find itself in the great confederacy of free states, English in their origin, English in their character, English in their institutions, rejoicing in their permanent and indissoluble union with England."¹⁰⁹

However, commenting on Banerjea's presidential speech, the *Englishman* wrote: "It pains us to descend from these lofty heights to a lower but more practical level. Very different sentiments were expressed in a letter addressed to us saying, 'the time shall come when we will kick out of India the whole set of you pale faced braggarts and rule our country in the name of our good Empress'—This is the end for which the Congress is consciously or unconsciously striving at."¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ *Report of the eleventh I.N.C. Poona 1895*, p. 51.

¹¹⁰ *Englishman*, 2 June 1896.



CHAPTER III

THE EARLY CAREER OF LAJPAT RAI AND THE EMERGENCE OF A RIFT IN THE CONGRESS 1882-1902

THE EARLIEST development of ideological differences in the Congress can be discerned in 1889 in the writings of Lajpat Rai.¹ To understand the development of his ideas, it is necessary to describe briefly his early life.

[Lajpat Rai was born in 1865 in Jagraon — a small town in the Punjab between Ferozepur and Ludhiana. His father, Munshi Lala Radha Krishen of Aggarwal (banya) caste, was educated in a Persian school, whose devout Muslim headmaster zealously influenced his pupils to embrace Islam. Though Lajpat Rai's father did not declare himself officially a Muslim, his religious convictions leaned heavily towards Islam (Sunni). He observed Muslim fasts, and condemned Hindu customs and rituals. His close friends were Muslims, and he was an ardent follower of Syed Ahmed Khan.

On the other hand, Lajpat Rai's mother came from an orthodox Sikh family. She resented her husband's leanings towards Islam and regularly performed the *pūjā*² and *shrāddha*³ rituals in secrecy in order not to arouse her husband's wrath. During 1870-1878 the family lived in Rupar in Ambala District, where Lajpat Rai's father taught Persian in the local school. Lajpat Rai received his elementary education from his father who taught him Urdu and Persian, read to him the Quran and generally sought to bring him up on the appreciation of Islamic ideals.

In 1879 the family returned to Jagraon and Lajpat Rai studied in the Mission High School in Ludhiana. He was married in 1877 at the age of twelve and a half. In November 1880 he went to Lahore and passed the entrance examinations to Lahore Univer-

¹ Lajpat Rai, *The Story of My Life* (Henceforth Lajpat Rai, *Autobiography*). Ed. V. C. Joshi, *Lajpat Rai Autobiographical Writings*, Delhi, 1965.

² Worship of God.

³ Rite of commemoration of ancestors.

sity College. He studied law and qualified in December 1882 as a Mukhtar (pleader).

In Lahore, Lajpat Rai was persuaded by Pandit Shiva Narain Agnihotri, leader of the Brahmo Samaj in the Punjab, to join the Brahmo Mandir Samaj and was formally initiated in 1882.

Lajpat Rai's closest friends—Hans Raj, Guru Datta Vidyarthi, and Rai Shiva Nath — were ardent followers of Dayananda Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj. It was due to their influence that he became dissatisfied even with his nominal membership in the Brahmo Samaj, particularly because of its Christian leanings.

Lajpat Rai's knowledge of Indian history was primarily based on a book entitled *Waqiat-i-Hind*⁴, from which he deduced that the Hindus were subjected to Muslim tyrannical rule. A second book entitled *Qasis-i-Hind*,⁵ made a deep impression on his mind, since it eulogized the heroism of the Rajputs in their struggles against the Muslims and impressed upon him for the first time a feeling of pride in being a Hindu.

Thus Lajpat Rai's early identification with Hindus and his attachment to Hinduism stemmed from a rejection of his Islamic upbringing. In his own words: "The respect for Islam that I had acquired from early training changed into hatred."⁶

Early in 1882 a fierce controversy raged in the Punjab over the use of Urdu or Hindi. Lajpat Rai's friends enthusiastically advocated the use of Hindi as the most suitable language for the rejuvenation of Hindu nationality. Lajpat Rai was prompted by them to uphold the cause of Hindi, and in his first public speech in April 1882 at Ambala, he opposed the use of Urdu and expressed his newly formed conviction that the political solidarity of the Hindus demanded the development of Hindi into the national language of India. It is significant that he was obliged to advocate this idea in Urdu since he did not even know the Hindi alphabet. As an outcome of the Urdu-Hindi controversy, he gave up studying Persian and Arabic and began to learn Hindi.

Lajpat Rai hesitated to join the Arya Samaj since his father was hostile towards it, but in December 1882 he attended for the first time an Arya Samaj meeting and became a member of the

⁴ *Selection from the history of India*, ed. by Maulavi Karim al-Din, Calcutta 1898.

⁵ Judges of India. ⁶ Lajpat Rai, *Autobiography*.

organization. He described the crucial importance of the event, which proved to be the turning point in his life, in the following words: "All that was evil in me I must have inherited either from those who brought me into being, or from my own previous incarnations, and all that was good and creditable in me I owed to the Arya Samaj."⁷

His decision to join the Arya Samaj marked a three-fold rejection; of his father's idealization of Islam; his mother's practice of Hindu ritualism which he regarded as sheer superstition; and the Brahmo Samaj. ✓

Above all, the Arya Samaj confirmed his new realization of pride in being a Hindu. Through its principles and teachings he learnt "to love the Vedic religion, to be proud of Aryan greatness and to make sacrifices for the country."⁸ ✓

In December 1885 Lajpat Rai and Hans Raj founded the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College — an institution which greatly served to spread and strengthen the doctrines of Arya Samaj. ✓

✓ In 1886 Lajpat Rai qualified as a Vakil and practised law in Hissar. He established an Arya Samaj centre in Hissar, acted as its secretary, led the prayers and read the sermons and supported it by annual donations of Rs. 1,500 which amounted to one month's income. He became a successful lawyer and acted also as Honorary Secretary of the Hissar Municipal Board. During his stay in Hissar from 1886-1892, his annual income reached Rs. 17,000. In six years he had saved Rs. 70,000. Yet he described his financial success as a failure, "to amass wealth was not the object of my life, to enjoy luxury was not my goal, to win official honours was not my ambition. I wanted to sacrifice myself for my people and my country."⁹ ✓

He felt stifled in the small town of Hissar and moved to Lahore. ✓ Lajpat Rai's first association with the Congress dates from its third session at Madras in December 1887. It was presided over by Badrudin Tyabji in order to enlist the support of the Muslims who had been advised by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to keep aloof from the Congress.¹⁰

Lajpat Rai played no active part in the Madras session, but towards the end of 1888 he published four "open letters to Sir Syed

⁷ *Ibid.* ⁸ *Ibid.* ⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ See above, Chapter II, p. 34.

Ahmed Khan"¹¹ in which he criticized Sir Syed's attack on the Congress as being inconsistent with Sir Syed's earlier advocacy of Hindu-Muslim co-operation. Reviewing Sir Syed's writings and speeches, Lajpat Rai argued that in his "Causes for the Indian Revolt"¹² Sir Syed emphasized that the wide gap between the rulers and the ruled was a contributive factor to the revolt, and that the remedy for bridging the gap lay in the introduction of Indian representation into the Legislative Councils.

Lajpat Rai quoted from Sir Syed's Gurdaspur speech on 27 January 1884 in which he had declared that it was essential for Hindus and Muslims to support each other and act in unison, and from his reply to an address of the Indian Association of Lahore on 3 February 1884 in which he advocated the same idea and explained that in the word *qaum* (society or nation) he included both Hindus and Muslims, who shared the same country and were dependent on one another for the advancement of their common interests.

Yet in his Meerut and Lucknow speeches in December 1887 and March 1888 respectively, Sir Syed advised the Muslims to disassociate themselves from the Congress, to regard it as a seditious organization, sectarian, and a harbinger of civil war.

Lajpat Rai attempted in his open letters to refute Sir Syed's charges by arguing that the Congress aimed to advance the very ideas which he had advocated before 1888 and challenged him to to explain his *volte-face*.

Lajpat Rai attended the fourth session of the Congress, held in December 1888 in Allahabad and presided over by George Yule. During the session he delivered a short speech in which he repeated his criticism of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan,¹³ and was congratulated on his open letters to Sir Syed. He also attended the fifth session of the Congress held in December 1889, presided over by Sir William Wedderburn, after which his interest in the Congress faded.

¹¹ "Open letters to the Hon. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan" (I. 27 October 1888, II. 15 November 1888, III. 22 November 1888, IV. 20 December 1888) by "The son of an old follower of yours." *Lajpat Rai — The Man in his word*, Madras, 1907.

¹² Written in 1858, translated into English and published in 1873.

¹³ *Report of the fourth I.N.C. Allahabad 1888*, p. 34.

He had come to regard the Congress as an Anglicized organization whose leaders cared mainly for their personal fame and were reluctant to make genuine sacrifices.) He shared the views of his Arya Samajist friends — Sain Das (president of Lahore Arya Samaj) and Hans Raj — who rejected the Congress because they believed that, since it was founded and guided by A. O. Hume whose first loyalty was inevitably to England, it could not possibly aim to win India's freedom from British rule. Lajpat Rai emphasized Hume's idea of the safety-valve function of the Congress, and understood it as a deliberate device aimed to set up a harmless organization for the purpose of paralyzing the development of a wider and more militant movement.¹⁴ This was a narrow interpretation which disregarded Hume's wider conception of the Congress as a vehicle which would transform the Government of India, peacefully and gradually, from its character of foreign bureaucracy into a stable national self-governing Dominion.¹⁵ Nevertheless, it was a valid interpretation as far as Hume's own emphasis on the safety-valve function of the Congress was concerned.

In his speech on the origin and aims of the Congress, Hume clearly explained that "by getting hold of the great lower middle class before the development of the reckless demagogues to which the next quarter of the century must give birth and carefully inoculating them with a mild and harmless form of the political fever, we are adopting the only certain precautionary method against the otherwise inevitable ravages of a violent and epidemic burst of disorder."¹⁶ Hume further explained that the Congress was designed to limit and control the forces which Western education and ideas had let loose before they would burst into a revolution.¹⁷ In the deliberations of the Subjects Committee of the third and fourth sessions of the Congress, Hume strongly opposed the

¹⁴ Lajpat Rai, *Autobiography*.

¹⁵ W. Wedderburn, *A. O. Hume: Father of the Indian National Congress*, London 1913, p. 48.

¹⁶ A. O. Hume's speech, "The Indian National Congress, its origin, aims and object". Allahabad, 3 April 1888. I. O. L. Tract 658.

¹⁷ "Western education and western ideas have let loose forces which unless guided and controlled might sooner or later involve consequences which are too disastrous to contemplate and it is precisely to limit and control these forces and direct them, while there is yet time, into safe channels that this Congress was designed." *Ibid*.

proposal to pass the resolution which asked the Government to abolish the Arms Act and enable Indians to own arms. He argued that his memory of the Mutiny would never allow him to support such a resolution.¹⁸

In emphasizing the safety-valve function of the Congress, Lajpat Rai was convinced that the Congress had frustrated a bolder movement which would have been animated by self-reliance, and which could have smuggled arms and bode its time until it felt sufficiently strong to expel the British.¹⁹

The second reason for Lajpat Rai's criticism of the Congress stemmed from his Arya Samaj-inspired conviction that the attempts of the Congress to court the co-operation of the Muslims were not only futile but dangerous to the interests of the Hindus. He believed that the Muslims were potentially capable of putting up a united front against the Hindus if their religious solidarity was galvanized by political issues.

He further believed that they would strongly challenge the Hindus for the future supremacy of India and that their effort would be strengthened by the support of Afghanistan and Turkey. As against this potential Islamic unity, Lajpat Rai pointed out that the Hindus were weaker in spite of their majority because of their social and religious disunity. Hence, he asserted, the Congress would have done better if it had concentrated its whole effort on fostering Hindu national unity instead of clinging to the façade of an Indian National body which falsely claimed to represent all Hindus and all Muslims.

It is significant that in having swung to this view, Lajpat Rai abandoned the argument which he had put forward in his open letters to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, and in fact expressed the very ideas which Sir Syed had promulgated.

While Lajpat Rai's adherence to the Arya Samaj clearly permeated his views and reactions, Surendranath Banerjea's official association with the Brahmo Samaj is equivocal. There is no clear statement in Banerjea's autobiography which attests to his membership in the Brahmo Samaj, and in the Reports of the Congress his

¹⁸ Hamendranath Das Gupta, *The Indian National Congress*, p. 169 and Bipin Chandra Pal, *Swadeshi and Swaraj*, Calcutta, 1956. A selection from Pal's speeches and writings during 1902-1907, "Loyal Patriotism", p. 28.

¹⁹ Lajpat Rai, *Autobiography*.

religious denomination is given as "Brahman" and as "Brahmo".²⁰ However, the most important and unmistakable fact is that Banerjea was strongly influenced by the personality and ideas of Keshub Chunder Sen, and that he propagated the ideals of the Brahmo Samaj.²¹ On his return from London in 1871, Banerjea and his family were socially ostracized,²² yet he was cordially welcomed by Keshub Chunder Sen and fellow Brahmos.

When he was dismissed from the Indian Civil Service, Brahmo friends—notably Ananda Mohan Bose—secured for him a teaching post in the City school, a Brahmo college in Calcutta in which Banerjea delivered his early speeches on religious and political themes. It was from this background that Banerjea, together with Ananda Mohan Bose and Dwarkanath Ganguli, two prominent Brahmo leaders, went on to establish the Indian Association.

Since Lajpat Rai's disappointment with the Congress and his criticism of its aims and methods were inseparably linked with his fervent adherence to the Arya Samaj, and Banerjea's convictions were inspired by the Brahmo Samaj, it is useful to contrast the basic elements of the Arya Samaj with those of the Brahmo Samaj in order to gain a better insight into the different premises from which they developed their different ideas.

The Brahmo Samaj of India, under the leadership of Keshub Chunder Sen, attempted to synthesize Hinduism, Islam and Christianity into an Indian National Church.²³ Keshub Chunder Sen (1843-1884) came from one of the most Westernized families in Bengal, drew heavily from Christian teachings, and believed that Hinduism and Islam would first coalesce and then be shaped by Christianity. "The spirit of Christianity," he preached, "has already pervaded the whole atmosphere of Indian society and we breathe, think, feel, and move in a Christian atmosphere"²⁴ Keshub Chunder's "New Dispensation" called for the harmonization of all conflicting creeds and for the fusion of East and West. He called

²⁰ Appendix giving list of delegates in Reports of the Congress.

²¹ *Speeches*, Vol. I, p. 10, "Indian Unity". Vol. I, pp. 116-117, "Keshub Chunder Sen". Vol. II, pp. 33-34, *Bengalee*, 12 January 1884.

²² Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 6.

²³ Keshub Chunder Sen's lectures in India, "The Future Church", *Sources of Indian Tradition*, ed. T. De Bary, Columbia University Press, New York 1958, p. 621.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 623.

on "Europe to enter into the heart of Asia and Asia to enter into the mind of Europe" and added, "We instantly realize within ourselves an European Asia and an Asiatic Europe, a commingling of oriental and occidental ideas and principles."²⁵

He preached the idea of England's providential mission in India not as a political doctrine but as an integral part of Brahmo ethics and asserted: "It is Christ who rules British India and not the British Government."²⁶ He saw the hand of Providence in the British conquest of India and stressed that it was primarily an intellectual and moral conquest which was ordained to enlighten the people of India and uplift them from their degraded condition. He consequently claimed that India was held by Britain on a trust accountable to God and that the Government of India was dutifully bound to expedite the mission with which it was providentially entrusted. Correspondingly, he preached, the Indians were bound to profess loyalty to British rule not only on the grounds of expediency, but as a sacred duty. The sovereign, Keshub emphasized, was God's representative and must therefore have the subjects' allegiance and homage. "We look upon Victoria as our Queen Mother and we are politically her children. She sits upon the throne as India's mother protecting the lives and property of her children, promoting their material and moral prosperity and helping them to attain political and social manhood. She represents law, order, and justice and is appointed by Providence to rule over us."²⁷ Hence any form of sedition was a rebellion against the authority of God's representative and was therefore not only a political offence but a direct sin against God.²⁸

This concept of sovereignty agrees with Indian traditional ideas of kingship. When the title of "Empress of India" was conferred on Victoria, Keshub Chunder declared, with reference to the Delhi Durbar, "We were rejoiced to see the rajas and maharajas of India offering their united homage to Empress Victoria and her repre-

²⁵ Keshub Chunder Sen, "We Apostles of the New Dispensation", *Sources of Indian Tradition*, ed. T. De Bary, p. 627.

²⁶ Keshub Chunder Sen, *The Brahmo Samaj, Discourses and Writings*, 2nd ed. Calcutta, 1917. Speech "England and India", delivered in Calcutta, 2 February 1870.

²⁷ Keshub Chunder Sen, "On British rule in India and loyalty to Sovereign", I.O.L. Political Tract 1368.

²⁸ *The New Dispensation*, Brahmo Tract Society, Calcutta 1884, p. 27.

sentative at the imperial assemblage".²⁹ Implicit in this view is the idea of equating Queen Victoria with the Indian concept of the *Cakravartin*.³⁰ The fact that Victoria reigned in England did not in the least impair her image as the Sovereign of India. Whenever Banerjea made reference to Queen Victoria he alluded to her title "Empress of India" in terms of "Our Sovereign" and "Our Mother". Bengali newspapers referred to Victoria as "Maharani", "Paramatma",³¹ and "Goddess". These were the manifestations of a deeper process by which Indians attempted to absorb and transform the British Government in the same manner in which former foreign conquerors of India were absorbed and accepted as India's own rulers. The enthusiastic processions which witnessed Lord Ripon's farewell tour of India and his reception in Calcutta — which was compared to the legendary entry of Rama into Ayodhya — attested to the readiness of Indians to accept a popular Viceroy as their own ruler.³²

This sentiment was expressed by Banerjea in his acceptance of Professor Seely's contention that British rule in India developed from local circumstances and enjoyed the support of a great number of Indians.³³

Again, the same sentiment was expressed by Congressmen when they responded with cheers to William Wedderburn's supposition that they wished to transform the British Government into the national government of India.³⁴

Banerjea harped on Keshub Chunder's theme of harmony and reconciliation and stressed the providential mission of British rule in India. But he lacked the religious fervour of Keshub Chunder and since he had been dismissed from the Indian Civil Service, Banerjea placed more emphasis on political expediency and supported his arguments by the theme of England's mission and by England's pledges to the Indians. Nevertheless, the principal ideas which he carried from Keshub Chunder to the Congress platform were the advocacy of Hindu-Muslim co-operation, and the conviction that Indian patriotism, loyalty to England and the permanence

²⁹ Keshub Chunder Sen, "Philosophy and Madness in Religion", speech at Calcutta in 1877. *Sources of Indian Tradition*, ed. T. De Bary, p. 619.

³⁰ The Universal Emperor.

³¹ The Great Soul. ³² See above, Chapter I, p. 21.

³³ See above, Chapter I, p. 25. ³⁴ See above, Chapter II, p. 42.

of British rule were indivisible.

In contrast to Keshub Chunder Sen, Dayananda Saraswati, (1824-1883) founder of the Arya Samaj, came from an orthodox Brahman family in Gujarat, a province which by comparison with Bengal was appreciably less affected by British cultural influences. He received a Sanskritic education and spent much of his life as a wandering ascetic.

While the ideal of Brahmo Samaj was to find a common denominator for Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, the Arya Samaj was a Hindu Protestant Reformation. It was founded in Bombay in 1875 and promulgated its principles in 1877 in Lahore. Dayananda Saraswati rejected Western values and relied solely on the Vedas, which he upheld as the "repository of knowledge and religious truths — the word of God."³⁵ He denounced post-vedic Brahmanical Hinduism as an over-subtle and exacting ecclesiasticism which reduced Vedic religion to a spiritless dogma.³⁶ He denied the recognized authority and superiority of the Brahmans on the grounds that they rested on deception and rigid indoctrination which had no sanction in the Vedas. He attacked the caste system and preached the right of equal opportunity to all according to their merit. In reaching back to Vedic roots and in interpreting the Vedas very liberally, the Arya Samaj wished to purge Hinduism, and aimed at doing away with the caste system, child marriage, and restrictions on widows, by emphasizing that they had been foisted on the Vedic religion by Brahmanical law.

Though the Arya Samaj believed in the doctrines of *Samsāra* and *Karma*,³⁷ it accentuated the ability of the individual to forge ahead by his energetic action (*Karma Yoga*) rather than resign to fatalism and predestination. In practice, the Arya Samaj uplifted Untouchables to the status of *Dvijās*³⁸ by investing them with the

³⁵ D. Saraswati, *The Light of Truth*, Lahore 1927, p. 678. *Sources of Indian Tradition*, ed. De Bary, p. 635.

³⁶ Lajpat Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, London 1915, p. 72.

³⁷ *Samsāra*—transmigration. *Karma*—literally "deed". The effect of former deeds — performed either in one's present life or in a previous one — on one's present and future condition.

³⁸ *Dvija*—twice born. The three higher classes: Brāhmans, Ksatriyas and Vaisyas were "twice born". Once at their natural birth and again at their initiation, when they were invested with the sacred thread and received into Aryan Society. The Sūdras had no initiation and were not looked

sacred thread and by interdining.

Inherent in Dayananda Saraswati's call of revival was an emphasis on Aryan pride, self-confidence, and self-help. The Arya Samaj drew its strength from the achievements of ancient India and criticized the Brahmo Samaj of Keshub Chunder as a confession of Hindu inferiority and as an attempt to introduce social and religious reforms, merely in order to enable English-educated Indians to be in harmony with Western social behaviour.³⁹

"The question is no longer of other people's attitude to us" said Dayananda Saraswati, "but rather of what we think of them."⁴⁰

He refused to learn English and discarded the word "Hindu" because of its Persian origin, preferring instead "Ārya".

Side by side with the attempts of the Arya Samaj to uplift the Untouchables, it called upon Hindus who had become Muslims to reconvert, and actively prevented conversions to Christianity.

Thus in its efforts to "unfasten the chains of intellectual, moral, religious, and social bondage",⁴¹ the Arya Samaj was a militant movement which combated Brahmanical law, as well as Islam and Christianity. Though the Arya Samaj officially claimed that it was not an anti British political body, its emphasis on self-reliance and self-help, and its non-obsequious attitude, inevitably expressed defiance against political bondage.⁴²

Hence the contrast between the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj becomes sharpened when it is centred on the political issue, since Keshub Chunder and Banerjea believed that British rule released the Indians from their own bondage, while Dayananda Saraswati and Lajpat Rai believed that Indians ought and could regenerate India's former greatness by their own efforts.

The first important sign of sectionalism in the Congress came into the open during the preparations for the eleventh session, which was to convene in December 1895 in Poona. The conflict centred on the issue of whether the Congress should or should not be concerned with social and religious reforms.

on as Aryans at all. A. L. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India*, London 1954, p. 138.

³⁹ Lajpat Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, p. 242.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

⁴² See V. Chirol, *Indian Unrest*, London 1910, p. 111—"Arya for the Aryans".

In the 1886 Congress, Dadabhai Naoroji laid down the maxim that the Congress was a national political body whose function was to voice the political aspirations of Indians, irrespective of their religious denominations or their social classification, and that if it attempted to discuss social and religious problems, it would only arouse frictions which would irreparably damage its loose collective unity. Naoroji emphasized that in posing as the Indian National Congress and in being comprised of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsees and Christians, the Congress could not possibly meddle with their peculiar social and religious problems, and had therefore to confine its deliberations to political questions which would weld all the members of the Congress into a cohesive body.⁴³

From that time, the Congress adhered to this principle. It realized that deliberations on social and religious problems would inevitably centre on Hindu social and religious questions and thus mark out the Congress as a Hindu sectarian organization. In particular, the Congress was anxious to rally the Muslims to its three day annual assembly in order to exhibit the validity of its claim that it also embodied and represented the Muslims. Furthermore, the Congress was a secular organization which had no authority to recommend, let alone sanction, any religious or social reforms. At best it could only recommend social reforms to the Government and invite legislation, but this would have aroused fierce resentment against the Congress from the very people whom it claimed to represent.

In spite of these considerations, Congressmen were consciously aware of the urgent need for social reforms and realized the force of Ranade's dictum that "India's social institutions impose a tyranny more oppressive than the most despotic acts of any arbitrary Government."⁴⁴

The solution to the dilemma was found in the procedure by which an annual National Social Conference was held immediately after the close of the Congress session, at the same place and in the same pavilion. It was a convenient arrangement because most

⁴³ *Report of the second I.N.C. Calcutta 1886*, Dadabhai Naoroji's presidential speech, p. 54.

⁴⁴ Ranade's speech at the 1893 National Social Conference, *Bengalee*, 2 January 1894.

of the delegates who came to the Congress also participated in the National Social Conference. While the Congress restricted its deliberations to political issues, the National Social Conference dealt with specific problems pertaining to Hindu society.

The subjects of its theoretical discussions ranged over the need to spread education to the low castes, the promotion of inter-dining and intermarriages, the promotion of female education and widow remarriage, and the encouragement of travel abroad by removing the pollution entailed upon it. Thus the Social Conference was an unofficial annex to the Congress and yet at the same time a distinctively separate convention.

When the Congress was about to hold its eleventh session in 1895 in Poona, Tilak placed himself at the head of the orthodox Brahmans of Poona, and acting as the joint secretary of the Congress Reception Committee, opposed the procedure to hold the Social Conference at the same pavilion as the Congress. Having been forced to resign from the Reception Committee for his opposition,⁴⁵ Tilak then warned that if the Social Conference would convene in the Congress pavilion "a separate People's Congress would be established in defiance to the Reformers' Congress."⁴⁶ He criticized the Social Conference as Western influenced, and its proposed reforms as damaging to the uniformity of Hindu society. He upheld the system of *Varṇāśrama-dharma*⁴⁷ and maintained that social and religious reforms would jeopardize the structural coherence of Hindu society and weaken its opposition to the Government.

He accused the Social Conference of being an attempt to destroy the long cherished customs of Hindu society and added that the Congress should rally the support of the masses by stimulating religious and patriotic zeal.⁴⁸

The threat of a split in the Poona Congress was avoided by Banerjea who mediated in his capacity as President-elect of the

⁴⁵ S. A. Wolpert, *Tilak and Gokhale*, p. 72.

⁴⁶ *Maratha*, 17 November 1895.

⁴⁷ The organization of social life through well-defined and well-regulated four classes and the organization of an individual's life within those classes and in the four stages of life.

⁴⁸ *Native Opinion*, 10 November 1895. It is significant that in this controversy, Tilak and the orthodox Brahmans of Poona were referred to as "the extremists", *Bengalee*, 30 November 1895.

Poona session, and succeeded in prevailing upon Ranade not to hold the Social Conference in the Congress pavilion.⁴⁹

Banerjea generally condemned the caste system, the prohibition on widow remarriage, child marriage and the illiteracy of women as "foul blots on the Hindu social system which must be cleansed and wiped out, before the political regeneration of India could be made possible."⁵⁰ Yet in view of the impending clash in Poona, he affirmed that the Social Conference was not and could not be part of the Congress programme, and that it had hitherto held its annual meetings at the time and place of the Congress merely for the sake of convenience.⁵¹

In his presidential speech Banerjea praised Ranade's conciliation which had "averted a crisis that might have proved disastrous to the best interests of the Congress."⁵² He reminded Congressmen that their organization had already been criticized for being a Hindu Congress and emphasized that discussions on Hindu social and religious problems in the Congress went contrary to the claim of the Congress to be the united representative body of Hindus and Muslims. He warned that if social and religious discussions would be associated with the Congress, it would only cause dissensions and schism in its fragile camp.⁵³

In the Shivaji memorial meeting which was held in Poona immediately after the Congress, Banerjea told the meeting: "Shivaji fought with the Mohamedans, and had recourse to arms. Our methods are different altogether. We do not fight with the Mohamedans. We seek to be united with them upon the solid ground of common national interests. We do not appeal to the sword; the pen is our weapon. We appeal to the methods of constitutional agitation."⁵⁴

Yet constitutional agitation and the Congress were strongly attacked in the vernacular newspapers. The *Sanjivani* wrote that "prayers and lamentations avail nothing, the only way to deliver

⁴⁹ *Bengalee*, 30 November 1895.

⁵⁰ *Speeches*, Vol. I, p. 68, "England and India", April 1877.

⁵¹ *Bengalee*, 28 December 1895.

⁵² *Report of the eleventh I.N.C. Poona 1895*, p. 15.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Speeches*, Vol. V., p. 87. "The Shivaji Memorial", December 1895; also *Maratha*, 31 December 1895.

mother India is by their sons-heart's blood."⁵⁵ The *Bhangavasi* wrote that the "so called Indian National Congress was a useless farce", that it was an organization of denationalized men whose only aspiration was to be appointed to high offices in the Government service,⁵⁶ and that the Indian representatives in the Legislative Councils were merely acting in a puppet show.⁵⁷

During 1896-1897, bubonic plague struck Poona, famine was widespread in Maharashtra and the Punjab, and there was scarcity of food in Bengal and most of Northern India. The *Maratha* wrote: "Take an oath, a holy oath by the love of India and by the noble memory of the heroic Aryan ancestors that as long as Indians are not treated as equal subjects, resolve to die rather than take an inch of Manchester cloth. Let everyone who buys one yard of English cloth be branded as a traitor to his country."⁵⁸

The *Samachar* reported that 5,000 inhabitants of Berar resolved in a public meeting to boycott Manchester cloth and vowed to use only indigenous goods.⁵⁹ The *Sanjivani* urged the use of swadeshi clothes as a patriotic sacrifice,⁶⁰ and the *Bhangavasi* echoed this theme and argued that such action did not entail sedition since loyalty to British rule did not include the duty to starve.⁶¹

Thus, Swadeshi and boycott which were to gather momentum during 1905-1906, had already been advocated as political

⁵⁵ B.N.N.R. *Sanjivani*, 20 November 1895.

⁵⁶ B.N.N.R. *Bhangavasi*, 30 November 1895.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 6 July 1895.

The *Bhangavasi* of 2 August 1895 attacked Banerjea for having voted in the Bengal Legislative Council in favour of a Drainage Bill which entailed a levy of tax, and condemned him as a traitor.

The *Hindi Bhangavasi* of 7 August 1895 revealed that Banerjea, acting in his capacity as Honorary Magistrate of Barackpur, sentenced a widow to two months rigorous imprisonment for stealing a piece of cloth, a sentence which was quashed by the Magistrate of Alipur who ordered the immediate release of the woman. The article went on to comment that "Surendranath Banerjea the great patriot and pillar of the Indian National Congress who publicly lamented the oppression of Hindu widows, failed to prove his own sympathy."

The *Bhangavasi* of 10 August 1895 wrote: "Surendranath, the patriot of patriots, it was an evil day that you were dismissed from Government service and chose to turn out a patriot."

⁵⁸ *Maratha*, 9 March 1896. ⁵⁹ B.N.N.R. *Samachar*, 11 March 1896.

⁶⁰ B.N.N.R. *Sanjivani*, 14 March 1896.

⁶¹ B.N.N.R. *Bhangavasi*, 14 March 1896.

methods in 1896. The *Punjab Samachar* wrote that the Government would not concede any political reforms or regard Indians as equal subjects unless Indians resorted to force. The article concluded: "If the Indians have any self-respect or any drop of national blood left in their veins, now is the time to prove it."⁶²

On 15 June 1897 Tilak published in his *Kesari* the speech which he had delivered during the Shivaji festival, in which he exonerated Shivaji's murder of Afzal Khan. The article, entitled "Utterances of Shivaji", read as the lament of Shivaji on seeing the poverty and oppression of his country. In it Tilak advocated—allegorically—the forceful removal of tyrannical rule: "If thieves enter our house and we have not sufficient strength to drive them out, we should without hesitation shut them up and burn them alive."⁶³

On 22 June 1897, W. C. Rand and Lieutenant C.E. Ayerst were murdered in Poona. Rand was in charge of enforcing measures to combat the bubonic plague which was prevalent in Poona during 1896-1897. These measures aroused strong resentment since they entailed house to house searches, disinfection, and the forced segregation of plague infected patients.

The assassin, Damodar Chapekar, revealed in his confession⁶⁴ the existence of a secret revolutionary society which was motivated by religious and patriotic feelings, and inspired by the Ganapati and Shivaji festivals.⁶⁵ "Merely reciting Shivaji's story", Damodar Chapekar said, "does not secure independence, it is necessary to be engaged in desperate enterprises.... Take up swords and shields and we shall cut off countless heads of enemies. We shall risk our lives on the battlefield in a national war, we shall shed upon the earth the life-blood of the enemies who destroy [our] religion."⁶⁶

⁶² P.N.N.R. *Punjab Samachar*, 19 & 20 January 1897.

⁶³ Report of Committee appointed to investigate Revolutionary Conspiracies in India, 1918, p. 11. Henceforth Rowlatt Report.

⁶⁴ Synopsis of autobiography of Damodar Chapekar, Home Prog. Public Vol. 5640 no. 5991, 25 August 1899.

⁶⁵ The militant character of the Ganapati and Shivaji festivals is discussed in V. Chirol, *Indian Unrest*, pp. 44-45, and in S. A. Wolpert, *Tilak and Gokhale*, pp. 67-80.

⁶⁶ Synopsis of autobiography of Damodar Chapekar, p. 25; also Rowlatt Report, p. 11.

The article of Tilak on the "Utterances of Shivaji" was regarded as an incitement to the murder of Rand, and Tilak was arrested on 28 July 1897 and charged with attempting to excite feelings of disaffection towards the Government.

The Poona murder and the writings of Tilak horrified Congressmen. Damodar Chapekar was executed by the Government and dismissed by Congressmen as an irresponsible fanatic. Tilak however, was a member of the Congress, a member of the Bombay Legislative Council, a prominent leader in Maharashtra, and above all an independent editor of his influential *Kesari* and *Maratha* newspapers. His ideas and his methods of arousing popular ferment were the antithesis of the aims and methods of the Congress. They presented a serious challenge to the constitutional agitation of the Congress and marred its image of respectability and loyalty.

The rules and procedure which governed the three-day annual session of the Congress⁶⁷ ensured that the slightest expression of disloyalty to the Government was immediately bridled, but outside its sessions the Congress in fact did not exist as an organization and it could neither prevent nor curb the publication of articles by independent newspaper editors. The only recourse of loyal Congressmen was to publish articles in their own newspapers, which upheld the loyalty of the Congress to the Government and deplored seditious articles. This was sharply illustrated in the case of the *Pratoda* newspaper—a leaflet of very small circulation which was published in Marathi in Satara—whose editor and proprietor were arrested on 14 August 1897 on charges of sedition for having published an article entitled "Preparation for becoming independent", which expressed the hope that India will attain the same political freedom as Canada.⁶⁸ They were tried on 28 August 1897 and found guilty of sedition. The editor was sentenced to be exiled for life, and the proprietor to seven years rigorous imprisonment. Judge Aston who delivered the sentence justified its severity on the grounds that it would serve as an exemplary punishment.⁶⁹

Commenting on the trial, the *Bengalee* wrote that the harsh sentence was ill-advised since it would enlist unmerited public sympathy for the convicted editor who, the *Bengalee* opined "should

⁶⁷ Discussed below, p. 82. ⁶⁸ *Bengalee*, 4 September 1897.

⁶⁹ On appeal, the sentence was commuted to one year rigorous imprisonment to the editor and three months imprisonment to the proprietor. *Ibid.*

have better been put in a lunatic asylum.”⁷⁰ The trial of the *Pratoda* editor and the comment from Banerjea’s newspaper—which had hitherto upheld the freedom of the Indian press—reveal the alarm on the part of both Government and Congressmen, which the Poona murder and Tilak’s article caused.

As a result of the impending trial of Tilak, an Indian Press Association was hastily set up in Calcutta with Banerjea as its appointed secretary.⁷¹ The Press Association was comprised of the *Bengalee*, the *Hitabadee*, the *Indian Mirror*, the *Hindu Patriot*, the *Bhangavasi*, the *Hindi Bhangavasi*, and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

On 28 August 1897 the *Bengalee* published Banerjea’s editorial entitled “The Olive Branch of Peace” which advised the Government that it would be unwise to bring Tilak to trial because if he were to be sentenced his popularity would reach the height of martyrdom.⁷² The article impressed upon the Government that “recent events have vastly added to Tilak’s popularity and if developed further he will be elevated to the rank of a demi-god.” “We are anxious”—the article concluded—“that the Government should avoid this mistake.” This article was followed up by a letter from Banerjea,⁷³ acting as the secretary of the Press Association, to the Officiating Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, which proposed that whenever the Government intended to prosecute an editor for seditious writings, it should first refer his case to the Press Association which would act as an unofficial censoring body and would reprimand the editor. In the event that the offending editor would ignore the warning of the Press Association, the Government could then prosecute him with the full support of the Press Association. Furthermore, the proposal concluded, this procedure would ensure that the offending editor would fail to secure popular sympathy or the support of other journals.

It is evident that by setting up the Press Association and by offering its service to the Government, Banerjea and loyal Congressmen attempted to create the machinery which would enable them to suppress or disparage seditious articles of independent

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* ⁷¹ *Bengalee*, 14 August 1897.

⁷² Banerjea drew the force of this argument from his own trial and imprisonment which elevated him to a position of a martyr during the Ilbert Bill controversy.

⁷³ *Bengalee*, 11 September 1897 (letter dated 5 September 1897).

editors like Tilak. But the Press Association died as quickly as it was set up since the Government turned down its proposal.⁷⁴

Tilak was convicted and sentenced to eighteen months rigorous imprisonment. Banerjea was ostensibly sympathetic to Tilak, and the *Bengalee* issue of 25 September 1897 which reported Tilak's sentence, was printed with black borders; but Banerjea's editorial on it concluded: "He will come forth from jail a far more powerful man than he had ever been before and for this service he is indebted to the fatuous unwisdom of the Government of Bombay."

The "Defence Fund" which was raised for Tilak fetched contributions from Bengal, Madras, Bombay, Lahore, Gujarat, Berar, Nagpur and from villages in Konkan and Maharashtra, and amounted to Rs. 48,000. It clearly attested the widespread popular support for Tilak, yet in reporting the success of the fund, the *Bengalee* tried to mitigate this demonstration of Tilak's popularity by interpreting the contributions to his defence fund as a testimony to, "United India—the soundest triumph of British rule, a crown of glory to the British Government."⁷⁵

Shortly before the Poona murder, Banerjea returned from England where he had given evidence before the Welby Commission.⁷⁶ In his evidence before the Commission, Banerjea suggested that there should be parliamentary control over the finances of the government of India; that the members of the Legislative Councils should have the right of proposing amendments to the budget; that the non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council should elect a member to the Council of the Secretary of State for India; and that there should be periodical surveys of the administration of India by Parliamentary Committees or Royal Commissions.⁷⁷ While in England, Banerjea addressed several meetings in which

⁷⁴ Reply to suggestion of Press Association from C. W. Bolton, Chief Secretary to Government of Bengal. *Bengalee*, 6 November 1897 (letter dated 18 October 1897).

⁷⁵ *Bengalee*, 30 October 1897.

⁷⁶ Royal Commission appointed to enquire into Indian expenditure and the adjustment of financial relations between England and India. Dadabhai Naoroji and William Wedderburn were among the members of the Committee; in addition to Banerjea, the other Indian delegates were Gokhale, D. Wacha, and S. Iyer.

⁷⁷ Report of Welby Commission, also Congress Blue Book No. II, and *Bengalee* special supplement, 12 June 1897.

he reiterated the plea that the process of fulfilling England's mission should be accelerated.⁷⁸

Ten days after Tilak was arrested, Gokhale published an open apology for an accusation he had made in England that two women had been outraged by British soldiers in Poona.⁷⁹ On his return, Gokhale discovered that he was unable to substantiate the allegation. In explaining the reasons for his apology, Gokhale wrote: "Our loyalty is our only claim on England for sympathetic, progressive, enlightened rule. I feared that if our character of loyalty was lost, our best national interests would be injured beyond repair."⁸⁰

In view of Tilak's writings and the Poona murder, Gokhale's apology was primarily aimed to offset the impression in England that Indians were disloyal. Moreover the timing of Gokhale's apology denoted that it served as a rebuke to Tilak's article.

Before the impending thirteenth session of the 1897 Congress at Amraoti, Banerjea warned that the Congress faced a crisis and that it was imperative that it should unequivocally reaffirm its loyalty to the Government.⁸¹ This proved to be the keynote of the Amraoti Congress.

In the presidential address Shankaran Nair re-emphasized the characteristic features which made Congressmen loyal, and frankly explained, "From our earliest school days, the great English writers have been our classics; Englishmen have been our professors in Colleges; English history is taught us in our schools; the books we generally read are English books which describe in detail all the forms of English life; week after week English newspapers, journals and magazines pour into India. We in fact now live the life of the English."⁸² Under these circumstances, Shankaran Nair asserted, Congressmen were animated by English political ideas and it was but natural that they sought political representation, but they fully realized that the fulfilment of their political aspirations were inseparably linked with the continuance of British rule. He stressed the conviction of Congressmen that British supremacy safeguarded India from the return to "anarchy, war, and rapine", and explained that the contemplated anarchical situation

⁷⁸ *Bengalee*, 2 June 1897. ⁷⁹ *Manchester Guardian*, 2 July 1897.

⁸⁰ *Bengalee*, 7 August 1897. ⁸¹ *Bengalee*, 25 December 1897.

⁸² *Report of the thirteenth I.N.C. Amraoti 1897*, p. 9.

would be in the form of Muslims' bid to recover their former rule over India, the internecine struggle of Hindu chiefs, and significantly, the struggle of the lower castes against the domination of the higher castes. Referring to the Poona murder and to the conviction of Tilak, he deplored the rigid measures which were enforced to combat the plague, but he emphatically deprecated intemperate speeches or writings which advocated severance from British rule.

Banerjea elaborated in his speech at the Amraoti Congress upon the same theme and declared, "We, men of the Congress, are the friends of peace and orderly Government. We denounce violence; we condemn violent methods; for we believe in our heart of hearts that order is the first condition of political progress⁸³ We, the men of the Congress true to ourselves, remain firm in our allegiance to those principles which gave birth to the Congress movement. Now as of old, we raise aloft the banner of constitutionalism on which are engraved in characters of light the words 'devotion to the British Crown and the sacred interests of our country'. Now as of old we wish for the permanence of the British rule."⁸⁴

These declarations reiterated the conviction of loyal Congressmen that there could be no half-way-house between order and anarchy. The British Government of India maintained law and order and any suggestion, open or veiled, to overthrow it, immediately raised for Congressmen the spectre of anarchy.

Congressmen realized that the Government of India did not recognize their organization but merely tolerated it. Yet the Amraoti Congress proclaimed the loyalty of the Congress with special zeal. It did so not only to counteract the impression that the Poona murder represented a wider conspiracy against British rule, but also in order to utilize the crisis by reminding the Government that the Congress willingly stood to co-operate with the Government. By this it hoped to gain better appreciation of its aspirations to be associated with the Government.

However, the effect of loyal proclamation was only to reassure the Government that the Congress presented no danger to British rule, and at the termination of his Viceroyalty, Lord Elgin declar-

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 68; also *Speeches*, Vol. VI, p. 61.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 72; also *Speeches*, Vol. VI, p. 70.

ed, "The Empire of India has been won by the sword and must be held by the sword if need be."⁸⁵

With the approach of the fourteenth session of the Congress, Banerjea wrote, "The peculiar character of the struggle is that we are fighting with Englishmen for the preservation of English principles in the government of the country, and the bureaucracy is apparently resolved to fall back upon oriental methods in the government of an oriental country."⁸⁶

In welcoming the delegates to Madras, where the fourteenth session was held in December 1898, the chairman of the Reception Committee, Subha Rao Pantulu, recalled that they were meeting on the 40th year of the Mutiny and made the following observation: "Today the elite of India's leaders, prosperous in their profession, respected by their fellow-countrymen, meet year after year to strengthen the foundation of the same rule which in 1857 ignorant and misguided people tried to overthrow",⁸⁷ and added that so long as the Congress would last, the events of 1857 would not occur again.

The Congress, however, had lost its initial vitality, and from 1898 to 1902 the struggle of the Congress centred within the Congress itself and hinged upon the issue of providing a constitution for the Congress.

The President of the Madras session, Ananda Mohan Bose emphasized that it had become imperative to infuse into the Congress renewed vigour in order to "give living force" to the resolutions of the Congress. He urged the adoption of a constitution, and suggested that a permanent body should be set up in order to discharge the work of the Congress throughout the year by circulating pamphlets in the vernaculars, by sending delegates to the countryside to explain the programme of the Congress and to awaken the interests of the whole country in the work of the Congress.⁸⁸

Accordingly the Madras session resolved that a constitution should be drafted which would provide each province with an

⁸⁵ *Speeches by the Earl of Elgin*, Calcutta, 1899, p. 419. Farewell Speech at United Service Club, Simla, on 14 October 1898.

⁸⁶ *Bengalee*, 10 December 1898.

⁸⁷ *Report of the fourteenth I.N.C. Madras 1898*, p. 11.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

Executive Provincial Committee. It further resolved that the constitution should provide for electoral divisions with a fixed number of seats allotted to each division.⁸⁹

These tentative suggestions signified an attempt on the part of the Congress to break out of its confinement to the urban areas and to percolate its ideas and programme into the wider circles of the provincial towns. But it was by no means an attempt to arouse or enlist the support of the masses. The Congress stood fast to the view expressed by Sir Ramesh Chunder Mitter that, "The English-educated Indians represented the brains and conscience of the country and were the legitimate spokesmen of the illiterate masses—the natural custodians of their interests, and those who think must govern those who toil."⁹⁰ This view was reaffirmed during the Madras session by Banerjea who argued that although Congressmen were criticized as a "microscopic minority", and as the "despised educated community of India" they were "the natural leaders of the unenlightened masses."⁹¹

As early as 1887, the third Congress appointed a committee to draft a constitution for the Congress.⁹² Among the 35 members of the Committee were Alan Octavian Hume, W. C. Bonnerji, Surendranath Banerjea, Narendranath Sen, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Subramanya Iyer.

No constitution was drafted but the committee was formalized in 1888 and became known as the Subjects Committee. It was enlarged to about 100 members who were elected each year by the delegates of the different provinces, but it maintained a permanent core which consisted of Alan Octavian Hume, William Wedderburn, W. C. Bonnerji, Surendranath Banerjea, Ananda Charlu, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Dinshaw Wacha, and Pherozeshah Mehta. These men convened the important public meeting⁹³ and formed the oligarchy which virtually controlled the Congress.

⁸⁹ Resolution XIX, p. 126. ⁹⁰ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 145.

⁹¹ *Report of the fourth I.N.C. Madras 1898*, p. 54.

⁹² *Report of the third I.N.C. Madras 1887*, Resolution I.

⁹³ When Gandhi visited India in 1896 to reveal the state of racial discrimination against Indians in South Africa he realized that in Bombay Pherozeshah Mehta's support for the issue was indispensable, while in Calcutta attendance in public meetings depended solely upon the presence of Surendranath Banerjea. M. K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad, pp. 106 & 111.

They enacted the following rules which governed the proceedings of the Congress:

1. On any point of order the decision of the President was final and thereupon no further discussions were allowed.
2. None but the delegates could address the Congress or vote in any manner.
3. Every delegate had to address the assembly from the speakers' platform and his address could be cut short by the President.
4. The Subjects Committee formulated all the resolutions, and selected the proposers, seconders, and supporters of each resolution.⁹⁴

In theory delegates had the right to move amendments or propose new resolutions. But since the speech of the Chairman of the Reception Committee, and the address of the president occupied the whole of the first day, and the remaining speeches of the selected proposers, seconders, and supporters of the resolutions could barely be delivered in the remaining two or three days, virtually no way remained for non-selected members to introduce unspecified subjects. On rare occasions when delegates made interjections from the floor, they were quickly dismissed as being out of order.⁹⁵

Thus the Subjects Committee controlled the agenda of the Congress while the public assembly merely listened to the resolutions and passed them by cheers and applause. The autocratic rules and procedure of the Congress ensured internal discipline, but more importantly, they ensured that the Reports of the Congress would read as manifestos of moderation and loyalty.

In 1895, as a result of the threat of a split which was narrowly

⁹⁴ *Report of the tenth I.N.C. Madras 1894.*

⁹⁵ In the third session of the Congress, when the resolution on a constitution to the Congress was proposed, a delegate (name not given) asked, "I want to know what is meant by a constitution, it might mean anything", but he was shouted down and his remark was ignored. *Report of the third I.N.C. Madras 1887*, p. 80.

In the 1894 Madras Congress, a delegate objected to the nomination of Elderly Norton to the Subjects Committee. His objection was dismissed by the President Alfred Webb, who called upon the assembly to confirm Norton's nomination and received its approval by a chorus of acclamation.

avoided in Poona, it was urged that a constitution should be drafted for the Congress.⁹⁶ But no constitution was drafted and as a result of the Poona murder the oligarchy of the Congress tightened its control over the 1897 Amraoti session.⁹⁷ Yet the Congress was waning. Its listlessness was evidenced by the decline in the attendance of delegates.⁹⁸ In the Bengal provincial conference of the Congress, the president Ambica Charan Mazumdar remarked that the Congress had "ceased to exhibit any tendency towards further development and expansion."⁹⁹

Three weeks before the Congress was about to convene in Lucknow for its fifteenth session in December 1899, no preparations were made to elect delegates from Bengal.¹⁰⁰ The *Bengalee* admitted that the forthcoming Congress would not present new resolutions but argued that the mere holding of the Congress was important in itself.¹⁰¹ When the fifteenth Congress did assemble at Lucknow, a delegate from Madras, Rathna Pillay, said from the Congress platform that the institution was degenerating into a three day annual Christmas tamasha.¹⁰²

The realization that the Congress was stagnating induced the oligarchy to yield to the pressure for a decentralizing constitution in an effort to revitalize the Congress. The constitution which the Congress adopted in the Lucknow session in 1899 provided an organizational framework on three levels: an Indian Congress Committee, Provincial Congress Committees and Standing Committees.

The Indian Congress Committee consisted of 45 members, 40 of whom were to be elected on the recommendation of the Provincial Congress Committees in the following set proportion: Bengal 8, Bombay 8, Madras 8, North West Provinces and Oudh 6, Punjab 4, Berar 3, Central Provinces 3. The remaining 5 members (out of the 45) were to be "appointed on behalf of the Congress"

⁹⁶ Banerjea's speech at Calcutta University Students' Union, *Speeches*, Vol. V, p. 143; also *Bengalee*, 29 February 1896.

⁹⁷ *Bengalee*, 8 January 1898. "It had been one of the most successful Congresses ever held, not a word was spoken from the platform which showed the least form of impatience towards the Government in spite of the famines."

⁹⁸ In 1895—1,584; in 1896—784; in 1897—692; in 1898—614.

⁹⁹ *Bengalee*, 20 May 1899.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.* ¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 9 December 1899.

¹⁰² *Report of the fifteenth I.N.C. Lucknow 1899*, p. 126.

and consisted of W. C. Bonnerji, Surendranath Banerjea, Ananda Charlu, Ananda Mohan Bose and Pherozeshah Mehta.

The Indian Congress Committee was to manage the Congress and act as its executive head. It was empowered to elect the president, to draft the resolutions and to select the speakers, to frame rules for the election of delegates, and to be responsible for the general proceedings of the Congress. It was scheduled to meet at least three times a year, once immediately following the Congress session, once sometime between June to October, and again immediately before the Congress was about to convene.

The Congress Provincial Committees were to be organized at the capitals of the provinces for the purpose of "carrying on the work of political education on lines of general appreciation of British rule and of constitutional agitation for the removal of its defects." ¹⁰³ They were to organize Standing Committees in their respective districts, to hold provincial conferences, and to carry on their work throughout the year. The functions of the Standing Committees were not defined in the constitution.

The most important feature of this constitution was its provision for the *elected* Indian Congress Committee, which was to take over the control of the Congress from the existing oligarchy. But the adoption of the constitution by no means signified a departure from the Congress' method of constitutional agitation, nor did it signify a surrender to radicals within the Congress. Banerjea's speech at the 1899 Lucknow Congress contained the following threatening remark, "We are the friends of Reform because we are enemies of Revolution. We have made our choice, let our enemies make theirs. Do they wish to belong to our camp or do they wish to belong to the camp of revolutionists? There is no intermediary step between Reform and Revolution. Therefore, you must enlist yourselves under the banner of Reform or you must take your place behind the standard of Revolt."¹⁰⁴

This was an obvious warning to the radicals to comply with the principles of the Congress or to get out of it. The Indian Congress Committee met for the first time in September 1900 at Delhi and elected Narayan Chandavarkar to the presidency of the forth-

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 68; also *Speeches*, Vol. VI, p. 159.

coming sixteenth session of the Congress which was to convene at Lahore.¹⁰⁵

The preparation for the Lahore session further showed the decline in enthusiasm for the Congress. Banerjea was specially invited to the Punjab in an effort to arouse interest and to stimulate participation in the forthcoming session. He addressed public meetings in Delhi, Amritsar, Lahore, and Rawalpindi,¹⁰⁶ but the small number of delegates who came to the Lahore session attested to the apathy of the Punjabis towards the Congress, and to the lethargic attitude of Congressmen from Bengal, Bombay and Madras.¹⁰⁷

During 1899-1900 the Punjab and much of Northern India were again affected by severe famine. During the 1896-1897 famine Lajpat Rai organized and largely financed with his own funds, emergency operations to rescue Hindu orphans from Christian missionaries.¹⁰⁸ He published in 1897 his translation of the life of Mazzini whom he adopted as his Guru, and also biographies of Garibaldi and Shivaji. In the preface to his Life of Mazzini, he emphasized that political liberation demanded the highest sacrifice. He urged that unless the leaders of the Congress proved themselves unselfish and worthy of being followed by the masses, it was useless to agitate for political reforms.¹⁰⁹

During the 1899-1900 famine Lajpat Rai organized relief operations for famine stricken peasants and sheltered 2,000 Hindu orphans in Arya Samaj orphanages. He contributed most of his income to this work. When the Congress convened at Lahore in 1900, Lajpat Rai attended the session and moved a resolution which stipulated that at least half a day of each annual session of the Congress should be devoted exclusively to a discussion on industrial and educational problems.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Alfred Nundy, "The Troubles of the National Congress", *East and West*, December 1903, Vol. II, No. 26, p. 1406.

¹⁰⁶ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 166.

¹⁰⁷ The number of delegates who attended the Lahore Congress was 567, one of the lowest in Congress attendance.

¹⁰⁸ Lajpat Rai, *Autobiography*.

¹⁰⁹ P.N.N.R. *Sat Dharm Prachar*, 5 November 1897.

¹¹⁰ *Report of the sixteenth I.N.C. Lahore 1900*, Resolution XII; also the *Kayastha Samachar*, January 1902, editorial survey, pp. 3-5.

The significance of this resolution lies in the fact that it insinuated in its vague wording the idea of committing the Congress to deliberate on the ways and means of promoting Swadeshi. This issue proved pivotal during 1905-1907, to the cleavages within the Congress. In the wake of the resolution two committees, industrial and educational, were appointed "to consider the improvement of Indian industries and promote industrial education."¹¹¹

The appointed members to the Industrial Committee included Lajpat Rai, Pherozeshah Mehta, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Dinshaw Wacha; and to the Educational Committee Lajpat Rai, Tilak, Gokhale and Banerjea.

The approval of the resolution calling for a half day debate of industrial and educational subjects and the appointment of the Committees marked a definite gain by the Indian Congress Committee.¹¹² It clearly implied that the rhetorical speeches of the three-day annual Congress should be replaced by practical discussions of matters concerned directly with the hardship of the masses.¹¹³

A further gain over the control of the Congress by the Bengal, Bombay and Madras veteran leaders was achieved through the redistribution of the 40 allotted seats on the Indian Congress Committee. The allotment of Bengal, Bombay and Madras were each reduced by one seat, two of which were gained by the Punjab, and one of which was allocated to the North West Provinces.¹¹⁴

Yet this gain was greatly offset by an amendment to the Lucknow constitution, according to which the Indian Congress Committee was to include in addition to the five members who were elected on behalf of the Congress and the forty members from the provinces, all the ex-presidents of the Congress, the secretary

¹¹¹ *Report of the sixteenth I.N.C. Lahore 1900*, Resolution XXV and p. 79.

¹¹² In the second Congress held in Calcutta in 1886, a delegate from the Punjab, Hukam Chand said "We should try to compete with England by establishing such industries as would support our own artisans and by purchasing things from them." His speech was cut short and his suggestion was dismissed. *Report of the second I.N.C. Calcutta 1886*, p. 65.

¹¹³ *Report of the sixteenth I.N.C. Lahore 1900*, p. 79.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Resolution I.

and assistant secretary of the Congress, and the Chairman and secretary of the Reception Committee as *ex officio* members.¹¹⁵

These consisted of A. O. Hume (General Secretary of the Congress), W. C. Bonnerji, Dadabhai Naoroji, and William Wedderburn—who were in London, and Pherozeshah Mehta, Ananda Charlu, Surendranath Banerjea—all ex-presidents, and Dinshaw Wacha the Joint-General Secretary of the Congress. In fact, the entire oligarchy of the Congress and their trusted lieutenants.

Nevertheless, the gains of the Punjabis in the Indian Congress Committee and the approval of Lajpat's Rai's resolution presented a potential threat to the hold of the oligarchy over the Congress.

The Indian Congress Committee next met in September 1901 at Allahabad. The Bengali members deliberately boycotted the meeting of the Committee in order to paralyze its work and diminish its authority.¹¹⁶ The only accomplishment of the Indian Congress Committee was to elect Dinshaw Wacha to the presidency of the forthcoming 1901 Calcutta Session.¹¹⁷

In view of the approaching Calcutta session, Lajpat Rai published two articles in which he publicized his views on the Congress and advocated measures to be adopted by the forthcoming Calcutta Session.

In the first article entitled "The Economic and Industrial Campaign in India",¹¹⁸ he blamed the British Government and the leaders of the Congress for the poverty of India. He argued that although India had great potential economic and industrial resources, the British Government purposely denied technological education in order to maintain India as an open market for British industrial goods. On the other hand he blamed the leaders of the Congress for having persisted in fruitless agitation instead of promoting Indian technological education. He emphasized that so long as India was poor, it could not achieve nor maintain political freedom and urged that each province should send one student every year to Europe and America to gain technological knowledge.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Kayastha Samachar*, "Squabbles in the Congress Camp and the forthcoming Congress", September-October 1902, p. 343.

¹¹⁷ Alfred Nundy, "The Troubles of the National Congress", *East and West*, December 1903, Vol. II, No. 26, p. 1406.

¹¹⁸ *Kayastha Samachar*, August 1901, pp. 131-135.

Implicit in Lajpat Rai's emphasis on technological education and on the promotion of Indian industries, was his Arya Samajist conviction that self-reliance and self-help were the essential prerequisites to the economic and political advancement of the Indians.

In his second article entitled "The Coming Indian National Congress—Some Suggestions",¹¹⁹ Lajpat Rai criticized the character, method and aim of the Congress. He ridiculed the Congress as an annual festival of English-educated Indians who assembled in order to amuse themselves and to increase their fame by "uttering plausibly worded platitudes in the shape of speeches." He mocked the dress of the well-to-do delegates and condemned the lavish decorations and furnishings of the Congress pavilions as an unjustified extravagance. He argued that this gave cause to Englishmen in India and in England to point to the prosperity of Indians under British rule and to negate the deliberations of the Congress on the poverty of India.

In elaborating on its principal defects, Lajpat Rai accused the Congress of having created the false impression that it could gain political reforms by merely passing resolutions and delivering speeches; of misleading Indians to place unjustified faith in the efficacy of constitutional agitation, and failing to impress upon them the need for great sacrifices for the achievement of political freedom.

He further attacked the Congress for its attempt to project a false unity in its anxiety to speak in the name of all Indians—Hindus and Muslims—while a good many of them did not sympathize with the Congress. He suggested that the Congress should be a bold Hindu political organization, instead of posing as an all-embracing body which jeopardized the chance of creating a united front of Hindus. In emphasizing this view, Lajpat Rai asserted that the Hindus, the Muslims, and the Christians, constituted different religious nationalities and argued that the attempt to unify them within the Indian National Congress, was not only futile but at the expense of unifying and strengthening the Hindus as a religious nationality.

In the same vein Lajpat Rai criticized the National Social Conference as an organization which was as powerless as the Congress

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, November 1901, pp. 376-385.

to promote the exclusive interests of the Hindus. He argued that because Muslims and Christians were allowed to participate in its deliberations, the resolutions of the National Social Conference were rendered meaningless. Instead, Lajpat Rai suggested, the National Social Conference should deal with tangible problems relating to Hindu society such as the protection of Hindu orphans from being converted to Christianity or Islam. He concluded that it should not sacrifice the interests of the Hindus for the sake of appeasing the Muslims and the Christians.

When the Calcutta session convened in December 1901, it was composed predominantly of Bengali delegates.¹²⁰ Its agenda and proceedings were entirely controlled by W. C. Bonnerji and Pherozechah Mehta through the president Dinshaw Wacha.¹²¹ The existence of the Indian Congress Committee was completely ignored.

The resolution moved by Lajpat Rai in the former session at Lahore to devote half a day to industrial subjects was not implemented.¹²²

Above all, no elections to the Indian Congress Committee were allowed and the Committee was thus extinguished.¹²³ This arbitrary procedure aroused strong protest from the Punjabi delegates who threatened to secede from the Congress and "an open split in the Congress was avoided with difficulty".¹²⁴

The ability of Pherozechah Mehta, W. C. Bonnerji and Dinshaw Wacha to ride rough-shod over the protest against their dismissal of the Indian Congress Committee, clearly indicated the strong measure of their control over the Congress. Gandhi's following vivid description of the 1901 Calcutta Congress session is illuminating:

¹²⁰ Out of the total members of 896, 580 were Bengalis.

¹²¹ *Kayastha Samachar*, "The Indian National Congress", January 1902, p. 58.

¹²² In his presidential speech, Dinshaw Wacha declared, "Many a vague idea is now floating in the air which requires to be definitely formulated, and many crude and ill-digested recommendations need to be . . . tested before we can all agree upon a common basis on which a fair attempt at industrial development might be made." *Report of the seventeenth I.N.C. Calcutta 1901*, p. 68.

¹²³ *Kayastha Samachar*, January 1902, editorial survey, p. 3.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, "The Indian National Congress", p. 58.

"The resolutions coming at the fag-end were...rushed through at lightning speed. Everyone was hurrying to go..."

'So we have done?' said Sir Pherozeshah Mehta.

'No, No, there is still the resolution on South Africa. Mr. Gandhi has been waiting long,' cried out Gokhale.

'Have you seen the resolution?' asked Sir Pherozeshah.

'Of course.'

'Do you like it?'

'It is quite good.'

'Well then let us have it, Gandhi.'

I read it trembling. Gokhale supported it.

'Unanimously passed', cried out everyone.

'You will have five minutes to speak on it, Gandhi' said Mr. Wacha.

The procedure was far from pleasing to me. No one had troubled to understand the resolution. Everyone was in a hurry to go and because Gokhale had seen the resolution, it was not thought necessary for the rest to see it or understand it!...There was no question about the passing of the resolution. In those days there was hardly any difference between visitors and delegates. Everyone raised his hand and all resolutions passed unanimously. My resolution also fared in this wise and so lost all its importance for me."¹²⁵

W. C. Bonnerji and Pherozeshah Mehta justified the elimination of the Indian Congress Committee by reasoning that "young and comparatively inexperienced members had assumed responsibility of deciding weighty measures."¹²⁶ Thus the Calcutta session restored the complete control over the Congress to the oligarchy. It passed the resolutions of former Congresses and ended in a note of self-congratulation.

The *Kayastha Samachar* wrote that the Calcutta Congress was "a little too much of a success",¹²⁷ and expressed the feelings of those who had supported the Indian Congress Committee in the following comment: "It ill becomes those who protest so loudly against the despotism of the Indian Government, to set up over

¹²⁵ M. K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad, pp. 139-140.

¹²⁶ Alfred Nundy, "The Troubles of the National Congress," *East and West*, December 1903, p. 1406.

¹²⁷ *Kayastha Samachar*, January 1902, editorial survey, p. 3.

their followers a despotism no less unbearable and to resort to unconstitutional methods."¹²⁸

In the National Social Conference which was held immediately after the Calcutta Congress, the Bengali "professed reformers" gave a cold reception to Lajpat Rai who urged that the expression of sympathy for the famine stricken and for the Hindu orphans should be turned into active support. His appeal was ignored and the Conference merely passed couched resolutions.¹²⁹

Lajpat Rai's reaction to the Calcutta Congress was expressed in two articles in which he advocated the need for a struggle within the Congress and the abandonment of constitutional agitation. In the first, entitled, "The Principles of Political Progress",¹³⁰ he wrote: "The first axiom which every Indian politician ought to take to heart is that no nation is worthy of any political status if it cannot distinguish between *begging* rights and *claiming* them." He condemned the Congress as an institution of beggars who pleaded for charity from the Government instead of realizing that "sovereignty rests with the people, the state exists for them and rules in their name."¹³¹

In his second article entitled "A Study of Hindu Nationalism",¹³² he claimed that the historical and religious unity of India embodied the basis of Hindu nationalism and that it was a mistake to attribute the development of Indian nationalism solely to modern Western influences. He contended that it was wrong to suppose that nationalism required the complete fusion of religious, social, economical and political action and argued that differences and controversial discussions were absolutely necessary for the healthy growth of nationalism provided one unifying ideal overruled minor differences. He urged all Indians to share the feelings of nationalism as the one ideal which would be "sufficiently broad and extensive to include all who took pride in one common name, common ancestry, common history, common religion, common language and common future."

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, September-October 1902, "Squabbles in the Congress Camp", p. 345.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, January 1902, "The Last Social Conference", p. 105.

¹³⁰ *East and West*, August 1902, Vol. I, p. 1040.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 1041.

¹³² *Kayastha Samachar*, September-October 1902.

If this was lacking, Lajpat Rai argued, it was still sufficient for the growth of Indian nationalism if all Indians, irrespective of their differences, would at least share a sense of unity in struggling together against a common enemy.

He warned that if the Congress decided to preserve an attitude of inaction in social, religious and political matters, it would result not only in the weakening of Indian nationalism, but in stagnation and the gradual extinction of Indians as a distinct nation. He concluded in asserting that the social and political improvement of the Indians involved a struggle amongst themselves as well as against others.

Bearing in mind that the article was written in 1902, it becomes obvious in the light of Lajpat Rai's later agitation during 1907, that his arguments were muted and should be recognized as understatements. His reference to "a struggle against a common enemy" and against "others" implied a struggle against the British Government.

The eighteenth session of the Congress was about to convene in December 1902 at Ahmedabad and it coincided with the Delhi Durbar, which was to mark the accession of King Edward VII after the death of Queen Victoria in 1901.

Kali Charan Banerjee, a veteran Congressman from the United Provinces, was nominated by the United Provinces Congress Committee as the potential president for the forthcoming Ahmedabad session. Unexpectedly the Ahmedabad Congress Reception Committee announced early in November 1902 that Surendranath Banerjea was "elected" to the presidency of the Congress.¹³³

It became apparent that Pherozechah Mehta prevailed upon the Ahmedabad Reception Committee to invite Banerjea for the presidency in order that his "unrivalled gifts of oratory" will act as a counter-attraction to the Delhi Durbar.¹³⁴ Consequently, Dinshaw Wacha passed the invitation to Banerjea "unofficially" and Banerjea accepted.¹³⁵

¹³³ *Kayastha Samachar*, November 1902, "Presidentship of the Coming Congress", p. 470.

¹³⁴ *Kayastha Samachar*, November 1902, "Some Further Light on Congress Unconstitutionality", p. 478; also Alfred Nundy, "Troubles of the National Congress", *East and West*, December 1903, p. 1406.

¹³⁵ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 173.

The arbitrary way in which Pherozeshah Mehta and Dinshaw Wacha selected Banerjea to the presidency of the Ahmedabad Congress, further aggravated the discontent against the autocracy of the Bombay and Bengal leaders, and the Punjabi delegates decided not to attend the Congress.

The assumption that Banerjea's presidential address would attract large attendance in fact proved wrong. Only 471 delegates attended the Ahmedabad Session (the lowest attendance since 1886)¹³⁶—of whom 423 came from Bombay, 28 from Bengal, 15 from Madras, 5 from the United Provinces and none from the Punjab.

The most striking remark in Banerjea's presidential speech was his tentative suggestion that since the Government of India did not protect Indian industries by tariffs, Indians should resolve to use indigenous goods as far as it was practicable in order to stimulate the growth of Indian industries.¹³⁷

In substance, the implication of this suggestion was in tune with the advocacy to promote Swadeshi, a subject which was hitherto avoided in the deliberations of the Congress. Clearly the pressure of the famines and the recognition that the Congress was becoming a small and isolated body, motivated Banerjea to venture upon the suggestion from the presidential chair that Indians should promote India's indigenous industries by resolving to use Indian goods.

He referred to the "pessimist school" namely the extremists, and advised the Government that the only criterion by which these elements judged British rule was the degree to which it alleviated the suffering of the people.

He repeated the charge that the Queen's Proclamation and England's pledges remained unredeemed and warned that "those who bring about the indefinite postponement of the redemption of solemn pledges and seek to quibble away the gracious promises . . . to which the national faith is pledged, have no conception of the irreparable injury they do to the British Government of India." In an obvious reply to Lajpat Rai and other "pessimists", he argued that there was no reason for despondency and that the

¹³⁶ The number of delegates in 1886 were 436, in 1887—607, in 1888—1,248, in 1889—1,889, then onwards it gradually declined.

¹³⁷ *Report of the eighteenth I.N.C. Ahmedabad 1902*, p. 44.

criticism that the Congress pursued faulty methods was unjustified since the time had not arrived yet to make final judgement on the efficacy of the Congress.¹³⁸

Banerjea contrasted the constitutional agitation of the Congress with European movements for reforms, and drew comfort from the fact that the agitation of the Congress was peaceful and entailed little sacrifice because Indians were fortunate to be under British rule which responded with sympathy to their constitutional struggle. He reaffirmed that the Congress stood for the permanence of British rule in India; that it confidently pleaded equal rights of citizenship within the Empire; and that Congressmen recognized that "the journey towards the destined goal must necessarily be slow...and can only be attained after prolonged preparation and laborious apprenticeship."¹³⁹

The Congress continued to remain under the firm control of the veteran leaders.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

CHAPTER IV

THE IDEAS OF THE EXTREMISTS AND THE SURAT SPLIT 1900-1907

IN OCTOBER 1884 Wilfrid Blunt wrote: "Today their motto is 'Reform', let us not drive them to make it 'Revolution' tomorrow."¹

In 1886 Sir Henry Harrison expressed this warning in the following words: "Repress the educated natives, their ambitions and their aspirations and you turn them into a solid phalanx of opposition against the Government; gratify their ambitions, and you make them the allies of the Government."² The aspirations of Congressmen were not gratified. Yet, notwithstanding its critics, the Congress continued to adhere to its principle of moderation in its request for reforms.

In December 1898 the president of the Madras Congress, Ananda Mohan Bose, warmly welcomed the appointment of Lord Curzon to the Viceroyalty and said: "Let a nation which is Christian endeavour truly to show the ideal of Christ, to carry out the divine command of doing to others what they would have wished done to themselves in the exercise of its power in its attitude towards Indian aspirations."³

Yet, in November 1900 Lord Curzon wrote: "The Congress is tottering to its fall and one of my greatest ambitions while in India is to assist it to a peaceful demise."⁴

Before analyzing the measures during Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty that aroused intense Indian resentment, it is necessary to indicate some general Indian grievances that had accumulated by 1900 and formed an atmosphere of social, economic and political discontent.

Socially, there was complete separation between Englishmen and Indians. In the unavoidable and rare circumstances when

¹ *Fortnightly Review*, 1884, p. 459.

² *Quarterly Review*, 1886, pp. 112-113.

³ *Report of the fourteenth I.N.C. Madras* 1898, p. 33.

⁴ Curzon to Hamilton, EUR. MSS. 510/6, 18 November 1900.

Englishmen and Indians met, Indians were expected to Salaam Englishmen in the street, to close an umbrella, or if riding, to dismount and give way. In going to a Government office, an Indian was not allowed to approach the building in a carriage, and upon entering the office had to remove his Indian shoes. Above all, the mark of Indian inferiority was felt most acutely in the trains and in the courts of law.

Admittedly, these customs were far less acrimonious than the rigid restrictions imposed by the Indian caste system, but the trains and the courts of law stood out as English innovations in which Indians and Englishmen were supposed to meet on terms of nominal equality.

In 1901 Lord Curzon wrote: "The Europeans are becoming more and more a caste and a white caste is not a good thing for India. The frictions between the two races are increasing. In Assam particularly relations between Europeans and their coolies are bad. Indeed I need hardly add that no European, whatever the evidence, is convicted, the maximum penalty that I have so far known imposed in a case of culpable homicide (which a jury in England would have been instructed to call murder) was a money fine of 150 Rupees."⁵

While Europeans in India could claim trial by jury which consisted of at least one-half European jurors, Indians could not claim the same protection. This provision resulted in the failure of trial by jury to fulfil its function of protecting the accused, when an Indian,⁶ while it was also ineffective against the accused when an Englishman, since his English jurors did not regard his offence against an Indian as a crime which outraged their social ethics.⁷

⁵ Curzon to E. Dawkins (Under Secretary of State for India), EUR. MSS. F. 111/181, 24 January 1901.

⁶ In the trial of Tilak in 1897, the jury consisted of six Europeans and three Indians, the six Europeans found him guilty and the three Indians not guilty, but his conviction was based on the verdict of the European majority.

⁷ Sir Henry Cotton, formerly Chief Secretary of the Government of Bengal and Chief Commissioner of Assam, described the trial of Englishmen on criminal offences as "Judicial scandals". It was inevitable, he explained, that when a tea planter was charged with the death of a coolie and arraigned before a jury composed of fellow tea planters, the biased jurors found him guilty of single hurt for which only a small fine was imposed. He added that Government intervention would have resulted in a storm of

While Banerjea rhetorized in 1897 at the Amraoti Congress " 'civis Romanus sum' was the boast of the ancient world, 'civis Britannicus sum' is the distinction of the subjects of the Greater Britain to which we all belong";⁸ Gandhi's report to the 1901 Congress on racial discrimination against Indians in South Africa,⁹ accentuated the realization that Indians were not considered British subjects.

In the economic sphere, the famines of 1897 and 1899 emphasized the poverty of the Indian masses. Dadabhai Naoroji's *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*, (1901); William Digby's 'Prosperous' *British India*, (1901); and Ramesh Chundra Dutt's *The Economic History of British India*, (1902) all protested against the drain of India's wealth to England¹⁰ and the impoverishment of the peasants. They contended that India's village industries, spinning and weaving, had been extinguished because of unprotected competition with industrial England, that the peasants were thus left dependent entirely on land cultivation, and that the over-assessment of land revenue and its rigid exaction prevented the peasants from saving any reserves to meet failure of harvests.

In the political sphere the main grievances of Congressmen remained centred on the meagre representation of Indians in the Legislative Councils, and on the virtual exclusion of Indians from the Indian Civil Service. At the Lahore Congress in December 1900, Banerjea once again invoked the Queen's Proclamation and complained that while a very small number of posts in the senior

Englishmen's protest and "no responsible Governor was anxious to face the wrath and anger of his own countrymen, however keen he might be to administer Justice between man and man".—Quoted in Lal Mohan Ghosh's presidential address, *Report of the nineteenth I.N.C. Madras 1903*, p. 26.

Sir Denzil Ibbetson, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab wrote: "Unfortunately one of the gravest scandals of our rule in India is the frequency of unprovoked and sometimes fatal assaults by Europeans upon natives and the virtual impossibility of procuring conviction from a jury".—*Home Prog.* 7590, 30 April 1907.

⁸ *Report of the thirteenth I.N.C. Amraoti 1897*, p. 69.

⁹ "All Indians are classed as coolies...black skinned members of the semi civilized races of Asia" *Report of the seventeenth I.N.C. Calcutta 1901*, p. 108.

¹⁰ A detailed analysis of 'The drain' is provided in J. R. McLane, *The Development of Nationalist Ideas and Tactics and the Politics of the Government of India 1897-1905*, Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1961.

Civil Service have been secured by Indians, only a minute proportion of posts were made available to them in the minor Civil Services—i.e. in the departments of Post and Telegraph, Railways, Forest, Police, Survey and Customs.¹¹

These social, economic and political grievances were intensified by the following unpopular legislations during Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty.

The Calcutta Municipal Bill (published in the *Calcutta Gazette* on 12 July 1899) reduced the size of the Calcutta Corporation from 75 to 50 commissioners by taking away 25 seats of elected members. Thus, the former two-thirds majority of elected members was eliminated and the new composition of the Corporation was distributed in the following manner: 25 elected members chosen by the rate payers, 15 Commissioners selected by the Government and 10 nominees of European commercial bodies.

Condemning the Bill, Banerjea charged that it had made a "mockery of Local Self Government".¹² In protest, 28 elected members, among them Banerjea, resigned from the Calcutta Corporation.

The University Bill was the second measure that aroused intense resentment. In January 1902, a committee was appointed under the Chairmanship of Thomas Raleigh, Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University, for the purpose of reorganizing the Universities. In June the committee submitted recommendations to raise tuition fees and examination standards and to reconstitute the University Senates of Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Lahore and Allahabad. Their Senates were to be composed mainly of Government nominees appointed for periods of five years.

¹¹ Banerjea gave the following figures for Bengal:

Out of total number of high appointments in:	Post & Telegraph	Forest	Police	Survey	Customs
	79	24	112	13	33
Posts held by Englishmen	75	22	103	13	32
Posts held by Indians	4	2	6	—	1
			(3 vacant)		

Report of the sixteenth I.N.C. Lahore 1900, p. 61.

¹² Banerjea, *Speeches*, Vol. VI, p. 116.

While Indians admitted the need to promote a higher standard of learning, they resented the officialization of the Universities, and the consequent diminution of Indian graduates.

Indians were further aggravated by the amendment of the Official Secret Act in December 1903, which restricted the freedom of the Indian Press.

Thus, local self-government, university education, and freedom of the press—the three most cherished boons of British rule—were curtailed.

For eighteen years the Congress had passed its resolutions, yet it remained unrecognized by the Government and its prayers and protests were unheeded. In an attempt to hearten Congressmen, William Wedderburn, Dadabhai Naoroji, W. C. Bonnerji and A. O. Hume sent a "Call to Arms" message to the nineteenth session of the Congress.¹³

William Wedderburn reprimanded Congressmen for having relaxed their agitation in England and warned them against the development of internal dissensions. Dadabhai Naoroji called upon Congressmen to strive towards self-government within the Empire, while W. C. Bonnerji urged them to shake off their feelings of despondency and look forward towards the return of the Liberal party in the next elections. On the other hand, A. O. Hume advised Congressmen not to expect any great improvement even if the Liberals came to power. He rebuked them for having fancied that the despotic Government of India would voluntarily yield political reforms or that people in England, whether Liberals or Tories, would insist on doing justice to Indians merely for the sake of justice. He scolded them for having failed to press their cause with earnestness and emphasized that they themselves were to be blamed for their discouraging position. Impressing upon them the maxim that every nation gets exactly as good a government as it deserves, he exclaimed, "You have indeed ever eagerly clamoured and vainly clutched at the *Crown* but how many of you will touch the *Cross* even with your finger tips?".¹⁴ He urged them to change their half-hearted and spasmodic efforts to an all-year-round constitutional agitation in India and, especially, in England.

¹³ *Hindustan Review and Kayastha Samachar*, December 1903, pp. 471-478.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 480.

Hume's "Call to Arms" expressed an unmistakable feeling of disappointment in the Congress. Yet it was Hume himself who fathered the Congress along the principle that public opinion in England formed its highest court of appeal, and for all his rebukes, he complacently concluded his "Call to Arms" with the following encouragement: "Sooner or later the Government would be wearied out by the incessant appeals and will concede Indian rights."¹⁵

The nineteenth session of the Congress, held in December 1903 at Madras, convinced the Congressmen of the ineffectiveness of merely passing resolutions and, correspondingly, the growth of dissensions in the Congress. Lal Mohan Ghosh presided over the session. He was the first delegate of the Indian Association to England and a prominent member of the Congress. His retirement from political activity was regarded as an indication of his estrangement from the Congress. In proposing Lal Mohan Ghosh for the presidency of the 1903 Congress, Pherozeshah Mehta emphasized that Lal Mohan Ghosh was deliberately invited to preside in order to prove that there were no factions in the Congress and that he, Pherozeshah Mehta, was not a despotic ruler of the Congress.¹⁶

Notwithstanding the assurances of Pherozeshah Mehta, Lal Mohan Ghosh declared in his presidential address that since the whole aim of the Congress was to liberalize the autocratic Government of India, it was essential for the leaders of the Congress to themselves refrain from autocratic rule of the Congress.¹⁷

For the first time in the history of the Congress, its leadership was criticized openly in a presidential address.

Lal Mohan Ghosh went on to criticize Lord Curzon's policy and denounced the Delhi Durbar as "a pompous pageant to a starving people."¹⁸ He acknowledged that British rule had indeed put an end to India's former internecine wars, but argued that there remained little difference whether Indians died on account of wars or anarchy, or whether the same result was brought about by famine and starvation.

The nineteenth session of the Congress reiterated its former re-

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Report of the nineteenth I.N.C. Madras 1903*, p. 8.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁸ The Durbar cost India £360,000. J. Morley, *Recollections*, London 1917, Vol. II, p. 166.

solutions which objected to the exclusion of Indians from the Indian Civil Service, the high assessment of land revenue, and the discrimination against Indians in South Africa; it added new protests against the University Bill and the Official Secret Bill. Yet it was the "Omnibus resolution" which recorded the bulk of Congress demands and it contained more and more items as the Congress counted its sessions.

The "Omnibus resolution" first appeared in the fifth session in 1889 and it had then already recorded the reaffirmation of the resolutions passed in the previous five sessions. In 1903 the "Omnibus resolution" contained thirteen resolutions. Among these were the demand for simultaneous examinations for the Indian Civil Service in England and in India, the separation of executive and judicial functions, and the extension of trial by jury to Indians. These resolutions had formerly been major issues of the Congress, they had been passed and reiterated in one form or another in previous sessions and were gradually tucked aside into the "Omnibus resolution" as new and more pertinent resolutions claimed higher attention.

When the resolution on the wider employment of Indians in the Civil Service came on the agenda of the 1903 Congress, its proposer remarked, "This is one of the earliest items on our programme, and if till now we have not been able to throw it into the 'Omnibus' it is simply because of its importance."¹⁹ When the turn of the "Omnibus resolution" came on the agenda the president asked the assembly whether he should at least read it, but in response to their negative reply, a copy of the "Omnibus resolution" was merely distributed to the delegates.²⁰ Congressmen had thus lost even enthusiasm for passing their own resolutions since they realized their ineffectiveness.

The apathy towards the Congress (only 538 delegates attended the 1903 Congress), and Lal Mohan Ghosh's criticism of its leadership before the open assembly, prompted Pherozeshah Mehta to counteract the damaging impression and hold the next Congress, not in its scheduled place, but in Bombay. By 1903 a well understood practice had been established according to which the Congress convened each year in a different province by rotation. It

¹⁹ *Report of the nineteenth I.N.C. Madras 1903*, p. 50

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

was the turn of the Central Provinces, Berar, or the Punjab to invite the 1904 Congress, and since Bombay Presidency was the host of the 1902 Ahmedabad Congress, in the ordinary course it was not expected to invite the Congress until 1908.²¹

By holding the 1904 Congress in Bombay, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta strengthened his command over the Congress by officiating as Chairman of the Reception Committee while his loyal Bombay followers formed the majority of delegates in the session.²²

The presence of Sir Henry Cotton in the presidential chair with Sir William Wedderburn on the platform to support him, was designed to invest the 1904 Bombay Congress with a character similar to that of 1889, when Sir William Wedderburn then presided in Bombay.

In proposing Sir Henry Cotton to the presidency, Banerjea frankly explained, "You have come to the rescue of our situation in the very nick of time, when some of us are prone to give way to a feeling of despondency."²³ In his presidential address, Sir Henry Cotton devoted special attention to leaders and followers in the Congress. "You cannot all be leaders" he emphasized, "Captains and Generals are few in number; the plan of campaign is designed by them but success is assured by the obedience and discipline of the rank and file."²⁴ He exalted Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, W. C. Bonnerji, Shankaran Nair, Surendranath Banerjea, Dinshaw Wacha and Gokhale as the illustrious leaders of the Congress and of India, and reminded Congressmen that the British Committee of the Congress in England headed by A. O. Hume and William Wedderburn was vital for their success. He warned Congressmen against expressions of "ignoble depreciation of the life-long labours" of their leaders and asserted that this dangerous symptom should be firmly suppressed and eradicated. He expressed his optimistic conviction that the impending general election in England would result in the return of the Liberals to power and that the appointment of a Liberal Secretary of State for India would usher in a new period of political reforms. He urged

²¹ *Report of the twentieth I.N.C. Bombay 1904*, Introduction, p. 1.

²² Number of delegates: Bombay—623, Bengal—105, Madras—106, Central Provinces—87, Punjab—56, United Provinces—43.

²³ *Report of the twentieth I.N.C. Bombay 1904*, p. 23.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

Congressmen to realize that the fate of India was to be ultimately decided in the House of Commons and that they should therefore strive to be elected to Parliament. In summing up the goal of the Congress Sir Henry Cotton declared: "The ideal of an Indian patriot is the establishment of a federation of free and separate states, the United States of India, placed on a fraternal footing with the self-governing Colonies, each with its own local autonomy, cemented together under the aegis of Great Britain."²⁵

It is significant that this declaration on the goal of the Congress was expressed for the first time in a presidential address by an Englishman. Henceforth it became the declared aim of the Congress.

The 1904 Congress was portentous in its attitude towards the proposed scheme of the Government of India to subdivide the province of Bengal. The two Districts of Dacca and Mymensingh and the Division of Chittagong (area of 9,000 square miles, population 6,564,000) were to be incorporated with Assam to form a new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam.

There can be no doubt that the proposal to partition Bengal was primarily motivated by administrative reasons. Bengal, with an area of 189,000 square miles and a population of 78½ millions, was too large a province to be efficiently administered by one provincial Government. Yet at the same time there could remain no doubt that the scheme valued the division of the Bengali-speaking Hindu population as an important political advantage.

Lord Curzon's Minute on the proposed territorial redistribution of Bengal dated 1 June 1903 reads, "The argument of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal Sir A. Frazer attaches the utmost weight which cannot be absent from our consideration. He has represented to me that the advantage of severing these Eastern districts of Bengal which are a hotbed of the purely Bengali movement unfriendly if not seditious in character and dominating the whole tone of Bengal administration will immeasurably outweigh any possible drawbacks."²⁶

When the proposal to partition Bengal was published in the *Gazette of India* on 12 December 1903, it angered the Bengalis who understood it as a deliberate measure aimed to break up their

²⁵ *Report of the twentieth I.N.C. Bombay 1904*, p. 37.

²⁶ EUR. MSS. F. 111/247, Minute Part II, p. 13.

national unity.²⁷ Eastern Bengalis resented the prospect of their being cut off from Calcutta, its High Court, its University, its Press and its general social gravity. Furthermore, they regarded their proposed incorporation with the Assamese with abhorrence since they looked down upon the latter as "naked barbarians" devoid of any civilization. On the other hand, western Bengali merchants feared that trade in jute and rice would be diverted from Calcutta to Chittagong, while western Bengali zamindars feared that their lands in East Bengal would depreciate in value.²⁸

Initially, the Congress avoided taking up the cause of the Bengalis. The 1903 Madras session passed a resolution which deprecated the proposed partition, yet it did so half-heartedly and reluctantly. In moving the resolution, Krishnaswami Iyer frankly explained that when the Subjects Committee discussed the advisability of presenting the resolution to the open assembly, the majority of the Subjects Committee objected on the grounds that the proposed partition did not constitute an all-India problem. They waived their objection only in deference to the pressure of the Bengali delegates.²⁹

Again, in the 1904 Bombay session, Ambica Charan Mazumdar publicly thanked the Subjects Committee for its permission to present the resolution, while the seconders and supporters of the resolution restrained their speeches to a few remarks which merely repeated the wording of the resolution.³⁰ This irregular procedure suggests that the Subjects Committee adopted the resolution reluctantly, and prevented heated discussion of the question in the open assembly.

In contrast to the marginal attention that was devoted to the partition of Bengal, the 1904 Congress centred its deliberations on the question of the employment of Indians in the Civil Service. They reflected the Congress protest against Lord Curzon's speech in the Legislative Council on 30 March 1904, in which the Viceroy frankly declared that "the highest ranks of civil employment in India must as a general rule be held by Englishmen for the reason

²⁷ *Report of the nineteenth I.N.C. Madras 1903*, p. 128.

²⁸ *All About Partition*, Calcutta 1905 I.O.L. Tract 1037, B. Ray, *The Case against the break up of Bengal*, Calcutta 1905.

²⁹ *Report of the nineteenth I.N.C. Madras 1903*, p. 131.

³⁰ *Report of the twentieth I.N.C. Bombay 1904*, p. 222.

that they possess partly by heredity, partly by upbringing, and partly by education, the habits of mind and the vigour of character which are essential for the task; and that the rule of India being a British rule and every other rule being in the circumstances of the case impossible, the tone and standard should be set by those who have created and are responsible for it."³¹

Implicit in this declaration was the assertion that British rule was to be administered by the British for all time to come; it repudiated Queen Victoria's Proclamation as well as the pledges that British rule aimed to enable Indians to share in the administration of the Government.

The disillusion of Congressmen was expressed by Subramanya Iyer who said that when the security of British rule was in doubt it was expedient to dazzle Indians with pledges, but since British rule had become thoroughly secure and Indians manifested their loyalty, the Government of India turned its back upon those pledges.³²

Banerjea expressed his protest in the following observation: "Under the new policy, race is the test of qualification. . . . The Charter Act had removed the badge of our racial inferiority, the Proclamation declared and affirmed that merit was the test of qualification, irrespective of all racial considerations . . . but now for the first time, there is an open and avowed attempt to repudiate the Proclamation."³³

In view of the impending general elections in England, the 1904 Congress resolved to send a delegation to England in order to "bring the claims of India before the electors, before the Parliamentary candidates and before the political leaders."³⁴ Significantly, it was Tilak who supported this resolution³⁵ and thus toed the orthodox line of the Congress in emphasizing that the agitation of the Congress should be mainly conducted in England.

The proposed delegates to England were Pherozeshah Mehta, Shankaran Nair, Lajpat Rai, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Suren-

³¹ Sixth Budget Speech, *India Legislative Council Proceedings*, Vol. XLIII, p. 562.

³² *Report of the twentieth I.N.C. Bombay 1904*, p. 69.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60. ³⁴ *Ibid.*, Resolution XV.

³⁵ Tilak—"our principal work, our principal purpose and our principal hope to carry out our programme lies not here but in England." *Ibid.*, p. 150.

dranath Banerjea.³⁶ However, only two delegates were appointed, Gokhale and Lajpat Rai.

The last important feature of the 1904 Congress was its decision to appoint a committee to draft a new constitution for the Congress. Its members included Lajpat Rai and Har Kishan Lal representing the Punjab; Surendranath Banerjea, Ambica Charan Mazumdar and S. Sinha representing Bengal; Pherozeshah Mehta, Dinshaw Wacha and Gokhale representing Bombay; Shankaran Nair and Madan Mohan Malaviya representing Madras.³⁷ Although the oligarchy of the Congress formed the majority of the committee, the decision to provide the Congress with a new constitution indicates an attempt to reconcile the radicals and close up the ranks of the Congress. Similarly, the extraordinary appointment of Lajpat Rai as an accredited delegate of the Congress to England, was most probably intended to rally the Punjabi dissenters.

However, before his departure for England, Lajpat Rai denounced the Government of India for its tyrannical rule and declared his uncompromising attitude to the Congress by emphasizing that, unlike previous delegations of the Congress to England, he would mainly seek support not from the Liberals but from the Social Democratic Federation of Henry Hyndman.³⁸

When Lajpat Rai arrived in London in June 1905 he was not greeted by any representative of the British Congress Committee. He was met by Shyamji Krishnavarma who took him to stay at the then newly opened 'India House' in Highgate. Shyamji Krishnavarma³⁹ founded in January 1905 an India Home Rule

³⁶ *Report of the twentieth I.N.C. Bombay 1904*, p. 151, Assessing the Congress delegation, Lord Curzon described Banerjea as a "vitriolic wind-bag" and added that Banerjea and Gokhale were "the nominees of an organization which is exclusively in extreme Radical hands which exists for the purpose of attacking Government and vilifying and insulting British rule." Curzon to Sir Arthur Godley, Under Secretary of State for India. EUR. MSS. F. 111/164, 11 May 1905.

³⁷ *Report of the twentieth I.N.C. Bombay 1904*, p. 231.

³⁸ Lajpat Rai's speech at his farewell meeting in Lahore, *Punjabee*, 15 May 1905.

³⁹ Lajpat Rai described Krishnavarma as a "sincere patriot with sound political principles" but added that he was a "thorough autocrat" and a "miser", *Autobiography*. For the revolutionary aspect of the "India House" see Rowlatt Report, pp. 12-13.

Society and acted as its self-appointed president. His *Indian Sociologist* propagated Home Rule for India and severely criticized the British Committee of the Congress. Through Shyamji Krishnavarma, Lajpat Rai met Henry Hyndman and it is to this period of Lajpat Rai's stay in England that his later socialist ideas can be traced.

Lajpat Rai delivered his first speech in London at a meeting of the National Democratic League. Shyamji Krishnavarma addressed the same meeting and moved a resolution on Home Rule for India. Lajpat Rai supported this resolution and told the meeting not to place any reliance on statements made by Congressmen to the effect that Indians did not want Home Rule.⁴⁰

Sir Henry Cotton strongly resented Lajpat Rai's support of Shyamji Krishnavarma's resolution, and moved a motion in the Congress British Committee to censure Lajpat Rai and disown him as a delegate of the Congress. In his defence, Lajpat Rai contended that as a delegate of the Congress he had by no means forfeited the liberty of expressing his own views, and the motion of Sir Henry Cotton was dropped.

During August 1905 Lajpat Rai addressed a meeting of the Liberal Party at Kettering and a meeting of the Labour Party in Lincolnshire. He told his Labour audience that Indians had lost their faith in the Liberals and henceforth looked hopefully to the support of the working class of England.⁴¹ To his Liberal audience he said that the racial arrogance of Englishmen in India could no longer be tolerated and that as long as Englishmen constituted a separate ruling class in India, Indians could not but regard them as aliens and their rule as tyrannical and unacceptable.⁴²

Since Gokhale was due to arrive in London in October, Lajpat Rai filled in the intervening two months with a short trip to America. He addressed meetings in New York, Philadelphia and Boston, in which he told his American audiences that since India was exploited by Britain, Indians desired self-government.⁴³ Although Lajpat Rai's stay in the United States lasted less than a month its significance was described in terms of "pioneering India's political contact with Americans".⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Lajpat Rai, *Autobiography*

⁴¹ *India* (London), 4 August 1905.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 18 August 1905.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 6 and 13 October 1905.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 13 October 1905.

In October Lajpat Rai returned to London to join Gokhale in a lecturing tour which included London, Manchester, Leeds, Edinburgh and Glasgow. In his speeches he stressed the poverty of the Indian masses and emphasized Indians' desire for self-government.⁴⁵

On his return to India Lajpat Rai summed up his visit to England in the following conclusions. The English voter and the English Press were too absorbed in their own domestic problems to care about the grievances of the Indians. The Liberal Party was as indifferent to Indian affairs as the Conservatives. The Labour Party alone professed sincere support for Indian Home Rule, but because of its weakness the most it could do was to pass resolutions of sympathy. Hence, Indians should cease to expect any support from England and should exert their own efforts to achieve political reforms.⁴⁶

In his speech at the anniversary of the Arya Samaj, Lajpat Rai called upon Hindus and Muslims to form a united front against the foreign enemy (i.e. the Government of India) and concluded with the following words, "Our struggle for freedom must be carried on in India . . . the tree of the nation calls for blood, world history was written in letters of blood, let us crown our national movement with martyrdom."⁴⁷ In essence, Lajpat Rai nullified the validity of constitutional agitation in England and called for militant action in India.

In February 1905 Lord Curzon gave Indians similar advice—"Equip yourselves with a genuine and manly love for your own people . . . not the perfervid nationalism of the platform, but the self-sacrificing ardour of the true patriot. . . . Learn that the true salvation of India will not come from without but must be created within. It will not be given you by enactments of the British Parliament or of any Parliament at all. It will not be won by political controversy and most certainly it will not be won by rhetorics."⁴⁸

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ "India and English party politics", speech at Lahore, 26 November 1905, *The Indian Review*, November 1905, pp. 750-751.

⁴⁷ P. N. N. R. *Paisa Akhbar*, 12 and 13 December 1905. This speech was cited by the Government of the Punjab in support of its decision to deport Lajpat Rai in 1907.

⁴⁸ Speech at Convocation of Calcutta University, 11 February 1905. Lord Curzon, *Speeches*, Vol. IV, Calcutta 1906, 83.

In his decision to partition Bengal, Lord Curzon supplied Indians with the opportunity to test his advice.

The partition of Bengal was announced on 20 July 1905 and went into effect on 16 October 1905. A new province called Eastern Bengal and Assam was created by the merging of Assam with the Divisions of Dacca, Chittagong, Rajshahi (without Darjeeling) and the District of Malda.

The partition was regarded by Bengalis not as an isolated measure but as the climax of Lord Curzon's unpopular policies. Hence it was taken up as a cause on which were fastened all the social, economic and political grievances that had accumulated by 1905. It evoked an unprecedented wave of protests which unleashed the Swadeshi and Boycott movement and harboured the formation of the New Party in the Congress.

Although the primary motive for the partition remained the promotion of administrative efficiency, the anti-partition demonstrations strengthened Lord Curzon's conviction that the political factor in partition was all the more advantageous. In February 1905 he wrote to John Brodrick, "Calcutta is the centre from which the Congress party is manipulated throughout the whole of Bengal and indeed the whole of India. Its best wire pullers and its most frothy orators all reside there. They dominate public opinion in Calcutta, they affect the High Court, they frighten the Local Government; and they are sometimes not without serious influence upon the Government of India. The whole of their activity is directed to create an agency so powerful that they may one day be able to force a weak Government to give them what they desire. Any measure in consequence that would divide the Bengali speaking population; that would permit independent centres of activity and influence to grow up; that would dethrone Calcutta from its place as the centre of successful intrigue or that would weaken the influence of the lawyer class who have the entire organization in their hands is intensely and hotly resented by them."⁴⁹

In May 1905 Lord Curzon added, "the best guarantee of the political advantage of our proposal is its dislike by the Congress party."⁵⁰

Swadeshi and Boycott were the outstanding features that distin-

⁴⁹ EUR. MSS. F. 111/164, 2 February 1905.

⁵⁰ EUR. MSS. F. 111/175, No. 284, 24 May 1905.

guished the anti-partition agitation from any former Indian protest against the policy of the Government of India. It is difficult to ascertain their origin, yet early advocacy of Swadeshi and Boycott as an economic and political doctrine can be traced to 1881 in the Punjab and 1897 in Maharashtra and Bengal. In 1881 the president of the Arya Samaj, Lala Sain Das, publicly wore Swadeshi clothes and preached the economic and political merits of Swadeshi.⁵¹ In 1896 Tilak advocated Swadeshi and Boycott in Maharashtra, and in 1897 Rabindranath Tagore established Swadeshi shops in Bengal.⁵² In 1900 at the Lahore Congress Lajpat Rai attempted to commit the Congress to promote Swadeshi, but the extinction of the Indian Congress Committee in 1901 proved the unwillingness of the leaders of the Congress to let their organization develop into the spearhead of an uncontrollable popular movement. Swadeshi was a direct corollary of the principle of self-reliance of the Arya Samaj and during 1905 to 1907, members of the Arya Samaj were prominent supporters of Swadeshi and Boycott in the Punjab.⁵³

During February and March 1905 a Punjabi ascetic, Tohal Ram Ganga Ram, ceaselessly advocated Swadeshi and Boycott in Calcutta's Beadon Square.⁵⁴ His audience was young students and his influence can be measured by the fact that during 1906 young Bengali students acted as the main agents to sustain and spread the Boycott movement. Boycott as a direct retaliatory measure against the partition of Bengal was first advocated in the Bengali Press by Lal Mohan Ghosh.⁵⁵

The 16th of October 1905 (the day on which partition took effect) was observed as a day of mourning and was marked by a mass meeting in Calcutta's Town Hall in which Ananda Mohan Bose, Lal Mohan Ghosh, Rabindranath Tagore, and Surendranath Banerjea headed the following "Peoples' Proclamation"—"We hereby pledge and proclaim that we as a people shall do everything in our power to counteract the evil effects of the dismemberment of our province and to maintain the integrity of our

⁵¹ Lajpat Rai, *Autobiography*.

⁵² Home Prog. 7312, No. 205, 25 January 1906.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, No. 106, 17 July 1907. ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 205, January 1906.

⁵⁵ *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 17 July 1905.

race. So God help us.”⁵⁶ In addition, Banerjea administered a religious vow to use, as far as practicable, Swadeshi articles and to abstain from the use of foreign goods.⁵⁷

While Lord Curzon lampooned the anti-partition agitation in March 1905 as “petty volcanoes who scream and screech and throw their torrents of mud into the air”,⁵⁸ in October the Viceroy wrote, “the agitation is now being conducted by methods of open terrorism and violence. It has been converted . . . into a purely political movement organized by a small disloyal faction.”⁵⁹

The twenty-first session of the Congress met at Benares in December 1905 under the shadow of the partition and the close of Lord Curzon’s Viceroyalty. The schism within the Congress was emphasized by the *Punjabee* in the following terms: “The hour of the inevitable parting of ways has come for our National Assembly. It should either decide to take advantage of the new spirit and launch out a bold policy, or sign its own death.”⁶⁰

The controversy in the twenty-first session centred on the Subjects Committee’s deliberation over the proposal to pass a resolution of welcome to the visiting Prince of Wales. The resolution was opposed by Lajpat Rai who argued that the visit of the Prince of Wales staged “a gala show which aimed to divert the public from the political unrest.”⁶¹ Gokhale and Banerjea pressed the acceptance of the resolution.⁶² When the resolution was carried by the majority of the Subjects Committee, Lajpat Rai and Tilak warned that they would oppose its passage in the open assembly. Their threat infuriated the veteran leaders who counter-warned Lajpat Rai and Tilak not to act as “sedition mongers” and “bad-mashes”.⁶³ The Chairman of the Reception Committee, Munshi Madho Lal, informed the police to expect a riot during the opening of the session, and ensured the presence of the Deputy Commissioner of Police in the Congress pavilion. The imminent rift

⁵⁶ Home Prog. 7312, No. 205, 25 January 1906.

⁵⁷ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 228.

⁵⁸ Curzon to Brodrick, EUR. MSS. F. 111/164, 23 March 1905.

⁵⁹ Curzon to Brodrick, EUR. MSS. F. 111/175, No. 452, 9 October 1905.

⁶⁰ P.N.N.R. *Punjabee*, 18 December 1905.

⁶¹ Lajpat Rai, *Autobiography*.

⁶² C. Y. Chintamani, *Indian Politics Since the Mutiny*, London, 1940, p. 79.

⁶³ Lajpat Rai, *Autobiography*.

was averted by Gokhale's appeal to Lajpat Rai, and a compromise was reached when Lajpat Rai and Tilak decided to abstain from the pavilion during the passage of the resolution. Two young Bengalis, J. N. Roy and R. Ray, refused to abide by this compromise and were forcibly removed and kept out of the session.⁶⁴ Thus the opening stages of the twenty-first session anticipated the open split of 1907.

Gokhale presided over the 1905 Congress. The most important declaration in his presidential address was, "The goal of the Congress is that India should be governed in the interests of the Indians themselves, and that in the course of time a form of Government should be attained in this country similar to what exists in the self-governing Colonies of the British Empire."⁶⁵

Referring to the anti-partition agitation, Gokhale praised Swadeshi but cautioned against Boycott. He explained that the term "boycott" meant "a vindictive desire to injure another" and emphasized that "such a desire on our part as a normal feature of relations with England is of course out of the question."⁶⁶ While Gokhale advised restraint, Madan Mohan Malaviya emphatically declared that the Congress did not advocate the Boycott of Bengal and that it opposed the spread of Boycott to other provinces.⁶⁷ In contrast, Lajpat Rai impressed upon Congressmen that Boycott ushered "the dawn of a new political era for India." "I must tell you", he continued, "that the message which the people of England wanted to send you through me was the message that in our agitation and in our fight and struggle for liberty we ought to be more manly than we have been hitherto. Englishmen hate beggary, hence it is our duty to show Englishmen that we are no longer beggars, and that we are subjects of an Empire where people are struggling to achieve that position which is their right by right or natural law. The Bengal spirit of protest has to be commended to other provinces of India. If the other provinces will follow their example, the day is not far distant when England will grant our rights. If you simply go there [to England] as a beggar without the consciousness of your power to demand your rights, you go there simply to be rejected. As friends of order we warn the Government, let it remember, and let you gentlemen also re-

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* ⁶⁵ *Report of the twenty-first I.N.C. Benares 1905*, p. 13.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11. ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

member, that people once awakened cannot be put down. It is impossible for British rule after a century of liberal education to put us down like dogs and slaves. Why be loyal? Once the policy of Boycott be adopted prepare for the consequence. Do not behave like cowards."⁶⁸

The 1905 Congress passed no resolution on Boycott, and the *Punjabee* reacted in the following editorial: "If the Congress persist in the present infatuated policy of disgraceful inaction and contemptible talk heedless of the demand made on them for action, the country will come to regard them as a body of ambitious imbeciles or a society of self-seekers who are sacrificing the real interests of their country on the altar of their vanity or own aggrandisement. Speeches without action are demoralising. If the Congress be hopelessly wedded to impotent rhetoric and despicable pomp, the people who have been crying for action should combine and start a Congress of work."⁶⁹ Describing the character of the proposed new Congress the *Punjabee* added that it would concentrate on imparting political education to the masses by regular weekly meetings and by issuing pamphlets in the vernaculars.⁷⁰

Throughout 1906 the anti-partition agitation gathered momentum in Bengal and its repercussions widened the gulf between Congressmen. Boycott became more effective when the picketing of shops by students was strengthened by social intimidation on religious grounds. This aspect of the agitation was mainly fanned by the Bengali newspapers and the following samples convey their general tone. The *Daily Hitavadi* wrote: "Boycott British goods and more especially boycott those native enemies of their country who use British goods."⁷¹

The *Hitavarta* urged its readers to ostracize non-users of Swadeshi by the following penalties—"None shall inter-marry or eat and drink with them; none shall buy from them or sell to them; washermen shall not wash their clothes; barbers shall not shave them; and boys shall not be allowed to play with their boys."⁷²

The *Sandhya* urged boycotting of Indian members of the Legis-

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

⁶⁹ P.N.N.R. *Punjabee*, 10 January 1906. ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 13 January 1906.

⁷¹ B.N.N.R. *Daily Hitavadi*, 9 January 1906.

⁷² B.N.N.R. *Hitavarta*, 28 January 1906.

lative Councils, Indian Honorary Magistrates and Indian lawyers practising in British Courts of law.⁷³

The *Hitavarta* warned its readers not to use English salt and sugar because it alleged "they were mixed with blood of swine and cow."⁷⁴

The *Sanjivani* approvingly reported that officiating Brahmans in Sirajgong resolved not to perform any religious ceremonies wherever Swadeshi was not observed.⁷⁵

The chief exponents of Boycott were Brahma Bandhab Upadhyay,⁷⁶ Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh. Their sources of inspiration were the writings of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838-1894) and the preaching of Narendranath Datta (1863-1903)—better known as Swami Vivekananda. An example of Vivekananda's condemnation of slavish imitation of Western standards is reflected in the following extract from his essay on Modern India written in 1899. "When I see Indians dressed in European apparel and costumes, the thought comes to my mind perhaps they feel ashamed to own their nationality and kinship with the ignorant, poor, down trodden people of India Oh India! with this mere echoing of others, with this base imitation of others, with this dependence on others, this slavish weakness . . . will you attain by means of your disgraceful cowardice the freedom deserved only by the brave and heroic? . . . You the brave one, be bold, take courage, be proud that you are an Indian and proudly proclaim 'I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother'. . . . Say brother 'the soil of India is my highest heaven, the good of India is my good' and repeat and pray day and night, 'O thou Lord of Gauri' thou Mother of the universe, vouchsafe manliness unto me".⁷⁷

The historical novels of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee provided an additional major source of inspiration, notably his *Anandamath* and its poem *Bande Mataram*. "The Mother" was represented, chiefly by Aurobindo Ghosh, as a concept which expressed at once both the divine motherland and the mother-goddess in

⁷³ B.N.N.R. *Sandhya*, 15 March 1906.

⁷⁴ B.N.N.R. *Hitavarta*, 29 April 1906.

⁷⁵ B.N.N.R. *Sanjivani*, 26 April 1906. ⁷⁶ Editor of *Sandhya*.

⁷⁷ *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Almora, Vol. IV, pp. 412-413. Cited in *Sources of Indian Tradition*, ed. De Bary, pp. 658-659.

the form of Durga.⁷⁸ "The Mother" and the slogan "Bande Mata-ram" thus conveyed both patriotic and religious devotion. They generated mass emotional appeal which the academic Congress and its rational principle of constitutional agitation, could not, and did not intend to arouse.

It was this religious fervour that transformed the anti-partition agitation into a militant movement. In its forefront stood the new leaders of Bengal—Aswini Kumar Dutta⁷⁹ and his lieutenant Satish Chandra Chatterjee, Brahma Bandhab Upadhyay, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh.

Although Surendranath Banerjea advocated Swadeshi and Boycott in numerous public meetings, his speeches stressed the need for restraint and his *Bengalee* condemned rowdyism and unconstitutional acts.⁸⁰ The force of Swadeshi was in its Boycott counterpart, yet Banerjea asserted that Swadeshi was not an anti-British movement,⁸¹ and that Boycott was a temporary measure adopted to protest against the partition and intended, not to alienate, but to appeal to British public opinion in England.⁸²

The Government of Bengal assessed Banerjea's role in the anti-partition agitation thus: "He has a certain widespread influence as a leader of the Cause at the centre of affairs, but his influence is diminished and impaired by the fact that he was in the I.C.S. and he is suspected of having in his heart of hearts a sneaking feeling for Englishmen—at any rate as far as his own comfort and convenience are concerned."⁸³ Above all, the ascendancy of the new popular leaders eclipsed Banerjea's prestige.

It was in this context that Banerjea endeavoured to regain his

⁷⁸ "The Durga Puja and Patriotism"—"The Motherland is no other than divinity itself . . . the Motherland in all her beauty and splendour represents the goddess Durga of our worship." *Bande Mataram*, 9 October 1907.

⁷⁹ In proposing the deportation of Aswini Kumar Dutta, the Government of Bengal described him as the most effective organizer and leader of the "Volunteers"—students who picketed shops. His speeches openly urged the expulsion of Englishmen from India. Home Prog. Political 7590/106 17 July 1907.

⁸⁰ *Bengalee*, 8 September 1905.

⁸¹ "Swadeshism is based on the love of country and not the hatred of the foreigner." Speech "On Swadeshism", Calcutta December 1906. *Speeches*. Vol. VI, p. 426.

⁸² Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 192.

⁸³ Home Prog. Political 7590/106, 17 July 1907.

popularity by courting arrest at Barisal. The occasion was the annual Bengal Provincial Conference which was held in April 1906 at Barisal in Eastern Bengal. Banerjea headed the Calcutta delegation to the Conference. On arrival at Barisal he was warned by Magistrate Emerson that the cry of "Bande Mataram" would not be tolerated. When a group of delegates defied the prohibition on shouting Bande Mataram, the police charged and forcefully dispersed their procession. Banerjea rushed to the scene and was ordered by Superintendent Kemp to quiet down the delegates, to which Banerjea replied "there is nothing illegal in what is being done, I am responsible, arrest me."⁸⁴ Accordingly Banerjea was arrested, summarily tried and fined. Having been released, Banerjea joined the Conference and was carried shoulder high to a table "to enable people to take the dust of his feet", while the Conference pavilion resounded with shouts of "Bande Mataram".⁸⁵ The police later entered the pavilion and dispersed the Conference. The arrest of Banerjea, the beatings of some delegates in the procession, and the dispersal of the Barisal Conference, gave fresh impetus to the anti-partition agitation.

The *Hitavarta* wrote: "The blood of the innocent will be washed by the blood of white oppressors. How long will the people of this country have more patience? The English have lost the confidence of the people, soon they will also lose their Empire."⁸⁶ Banerjea was hailed as a national hero, and indignation meetings were held at Calcutta and numerous places in Bengal, as well as at Madras, Bombay, Delhi, Allahabad, Amritsar and Lahore. Yet none made more capital of the Barisal incident than Banerjea himself. His *Bengalee* described the indignation meetings as testimony to Banerjea's widespread popularity.⁸⁷ It elevated Banerjea to the rank of a martyr and recalled Banerjea's imprisonment in 1883 during the Ilbert Bill controversy.⁸⁸

The visit of Tilak to Bengal during June 1906 to celebrate the tenth anniversary of Shivaji's festival gave an additional impetus to the anti-partition agitation. At his reception meetings in Calcutta Tilak declared, "The words 'Bande Mataram' are now ins-

⁸⁴ Home Prog. Public 7312/165, June 1906; also Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 223.

⁸⁵ *Bengalee*, 15 April 1906.

⁸⁶ B.N.N.R. *Hitavarta*, 29 April 1906.

⁸⁷ *Bengalee*, 17 April 1906.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 22 and 26 April 1906.

cribed on the temple of Shivaji at Ratnagiri.”⁸⁹ “The Shivaji festival is an inspiring political festival which must spread all over India. The Goddess Kali is the presiding Goddess in Bengal, the same Goddess was the protector of Shivaji. We cannot conceive of Shivaji without Bhawani.”⁹⁰ Having thus merged “Bande Mataram” with Shivaji’s festival, Tilak avowed “a Shivaji would yet come and lead us to glory and prosperity.”⁹¹ Banerjea hailed Tilak at Calcutta as “the uncrowned king of the Deccan, on whom the mantle of the Peshwas had fallen”,⁹² while at Belgaum, Gangadhar Rao Deshpande publicly styled Tilak as “Rajadhiraja Chatrapati Tilak Maharaj” and “Tilak Lokamanya, Our Shivaji”.⁹³

Banerjea too was proclaimed a messianic hero in a Shanti Sechan (benediction) ceremony in Calcutta, in which a floral chaplet was placed on his head while Brahmans blew conches and recited Vedic mantras.⁹⁴ But while the projection of Tilak as the new Shivaji enhanced Tilak’s popularity, the mock coronation of Banerjea resulted in a serious setback to his prestige. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* ridiculed Banerjea for having posed as a messiah and condemned his Shanti Sechan ceremony.⁹⁵ The *Hindu Patriot* described the ceremony as a “miserable crowning farce” and advised the “new king” to retire.⁹⁶ The *Englishman* wrote “we pity the future of the nation which has a buffoon as its spokesman.”⁹⁷ In addition to the general condemnation of Banerjea’s mock coronation, he was rebuked for having urged a mass meeting at Kali-ghat to swear by Kali not to use English goods, on the grounds that Kali was repugnant to Banerjea’s own religious convictions.⁹⁸ On the other hand, Lord Minto’s letter to Morley on Banerjea reads “It was simply marvellous, with the troubles and anxieties of a few months ago still fresh in one’s memory, to see the ‘King of Bengal’ . . . asking for my assistance to moderate the evil pas-

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 5 June 1906.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 6 June 1906. (Bhawani = Kali).

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 7 June 1906. ⁹² *Ibid.*, 8 June 1906.

⁹³ *Englishman*, 6 October 1906 (Rajadhiraja = King of Kings, Lokamanya = Revered by the people).

⁹⁴ *Bengalee*, 2 September 1906.

⁹⁵ B.N.N.R. *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 5 September 1906.

⁹⁶ B.N.N.R. *Hindu Patriot*, 11 September 1906.

⁹⁷ *Englishman*, 5 September 1906.

⁹⁸ B.N.N.R. *Indian Nation*, 10 September 1906.

sions of the Bengali, and inveighing against the extravagances of Bipin Chandra Pal."⁹⁹ Yet, in a general perspective, the oscillation of Banerjea, his arrest at Barisal and his mock coronation were, for all their wide publicity, only marginal events in the anti-partition agitation. The question of partition itself receded into the background and the main issue became self-government or Swaraj.

In August 1906, Gokhale told Morley that the aim of the Congress was the attainment of self-government within the Empire.¹⁰⁰ But while Gokhale continued to advocate in London the urgent need for a bold declaration on self-government for India in order to regain the confidence of loyal Indians,¹⁰¹ in India, Lajpat Rai, Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh dismissed prayers and appeals to the British Government as useless mendicancy, and emphasized that the Government of India would hand over its powers when "the force of circumstances compelled it to do so in spite of itself."¹⁰² This conviction was particularly strengthened by the fact that after Curzon's Viceroyalty, the appointment of Morley to the post of Secretary of State for India was welcomed with relief and raised expectations of a new policy to be marked by Morley's liberalism. Yet the refusal of Morley to undo the partition of Bengal and the delay in the introduction of liberal reforms caused bitter disillusion.

The *Yugantar* wrote: "War or a revolution is far better than death in peace."¹⁰³ It urged Indians to draw inspiration from Japan's victory over Russia, and it interpreted the Sepoy Mutiny as "the first Indian war for independence."¹⁰⁴

New India wrote: "Absolute national autonomy is the goal. The nation must succeed in gaining it, or must perish in the attempt. Revolution is inevitable."¹⁰⁵ Towards the approaching

⁹⁹ Minto to Morley, 19 March 1907; Mary Countess of Minto, *India:*

Minto to Morley, London, 1934, p. 109.

¹⁰⁰ Morley's *Recollections*, Vol. II, p. 181.

¹⁰¹ Gokhale's address before the East India Association, *Indian Review*, July 1906, pp. 526-528.

¹⁰² Lajpat Rai, "The Swadeshi Movement", *Indian Review*, May 1906, p. 356.

¹⁰³ B.N.N.R. *Yugantar*, 17 June 1906.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 16 December 1906.

¹⁰⁵ B.N.N.R. *New India*, 10 November 1906.

twenty-second session of the Congress, the *Sandhya* wrote: "English-educated Indians have become slaves to the feringhis and say we must live with them as partners. The management of the Congress must be wrested from the hands of the demi-feringhis."¹⁰⁶

An open split was forecast in the Congress when the hitherto unconsolidated groups of conservative and radical Congressmen converged on two opposite factions. The veteran leaders and their followers became styled the "old party" or "the moderates", while "the new party" led by Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh became known as "the nationalists" or "the extremists".

When Tilak's candidature for the presidency of the 1906 Congress was advocated by the extremists, Banerjea prevailed upon Dadabhai Naoroji to come from England and preside over the session.¹⁰⁷ The twenty-second session of the Congress, held in Calcutta in December 1906, had the highest attendance of delegates since 1889¹⁰⁸ and its proceedings reveal an open battle between the old and the new parties. The key-note of the session was Dadabhai Naoroji's declaration: "Instead of going into further details of our rights as British citizens, the whole matter can be comprised in one word, self-government or Swaraj like that of the United Kingdom or the Colonies."¹⁰⁹

It was the first time that "Swaraj" was uttered in the Congress, yet its ambiguous definition "like that of the United Kingdom or the Colonies" resulted in intensifying the rift between the moderates and the extremists. In the Subjects Committee meeting, Pherozeshah Mehta, Dinshaw Wacha, Gokhale, Bhupendranath Basu, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Surendranath Banerjea were opposed by Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Lajpat Rai and cries of "down with Banerjea", "down with Pherozeshah Mehta" threatened to

¹⁰⁶ B.N.N.R. *Sandhya*, 22 November 1906.

¹⁰⁷ Banerjea to Naoroji—"Those who were canvassing for Tilak have given us the assurance that they will unanimously join in electing you as President and have authorised me to communicate the fact to you . . . you have saved us from a great crisis." 25 October 1906, R. P. Masani, *Dadabhai Naoroji, The Grand Old Man of India*, London, 1939, p. 497.

¹⁰⁸ 1889—1,889 delegates; 1906—1,663 delegates.

¹⁰⁹ *Report of twenty-second I.N.C. Calcutta 1906*, p. 21

break up the meeting.¹¹⁰ The conflict centred on the formulation of the Boycott and Swadeshi resolutions. While Banerjea, Pheroze-shah Mehta and Madan Mohan Malaviya insisted on limiting the endorsement of boycott to only Bengal, Bipin Chandra Pal demanded Congress recommendation of universal economic and political boycott. Pal's demand was rejected by the veteran leaders but a temporary compromise was agreed on Tilak's suggestion that the Swadeshi resolution would conclude with the clause "even at some sacrifice". Thus the resolution on Boycott read, "Having regard to the fact that the people of this country have little or no voice in its administration and that their representations to the Government do not receive due consideration, this Congress is of opinion that the Boycott Movement inaugurated in Bengal by way of protest against the partition of that province, was and is legitimate."¹¹¹ While the resolution on Swadeshi read, "This Congress accords its most cordial support to the Swadeshi movement and calls upon the people of the country to labour for its success by making earnest and sustained efforts to promote the growth of indigenous industries and to stimulate the production of indigenous articles by giving them preference over imported commodities, even at some sacrifice."¹¹²

However, the dispute over the interpretation of Boycott was reopened in the general assembly of the Congress when Banerjea exclaimed, "A section of our people have lost all confidence in the utility of constitutional agitation, they say that they decline to approach the Government with memorials and petitions . . . they say that self-respect demands that they should have nothing whatever to do with the Government. I am not in sympathy with this view at all. I think that political agitation must be continued and I further think that petitions should be submitted." In response to cries of "no", "no", Banerjea continued, "You may say 'no' to the end of your life and you will not convince me that in this matter I am in the wrong."¹¹³ In contrast, Bipin Chandra Pal expressed the extremists' view when he urged total disassociation

¹¹⁰ S. Brimasankara Row, *The 22nd Indian National Congress 1907* I.O.L. Tract 1028.

¹¹¹ *Report of the twenty-second I.N.C. Calcutta 1906*, Resolution VII.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, Resolution VIII.

¹¹³ *Report of the twenty-second I.N.C. Calcutta 1906*, p. 75.

from the Government, and emphasized that the term "Boycott Movement" implied the spread of Boycott to other provinces. Furthermore, he advocated Boycott as a permanent political weapon against British rule.¹¹⁴

This exposition was strongly rejected by Madan Mohan Malaviya who declared that the Congress completely disavowed the remarks of Bipin Chandra Pal.¹¹⁵ Gokhale re-read the Boycott resolution and added "to the extent of the resolution we all go together, beyond this if any of you want to go, go by all means but do not go in the name of the Congress."¹¹⁶ The different interpretations of the Boycott resolution expressed a fundamental cleavage between the moderates and the extremists, and although the 1906 Congress endeavoured to conclude its proceedings with an outward appearance of reconciliation, it clearly signified an impending dissolution.

During January to May 1907, Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh set out to canvass support for the new party. The common denominator in their speeches and writings was an emphatic assertion that the belief in England's providential mission proved fallacious. They disparaged the moderates' plea for Indians' equality of rights as British subjects, and emphasized that Indians were subjugated people whose rights for equality and liberty rested solely on the basis of fundamental human rights as enunciated by the French Revolution.¹¹⁷

Tilak presented the relationship between Indians and the Government of India in terms of power politics between rulers and ruled. He emphasized that politics were devoid of benevolence, and that history never recorded an instance in which an Empire ceased to exercise its rule by conceding its dominion voluntarily. In Tilak's words, "At present we are clerks and willing instruments of our oppression in the hands of an alien Government. The new party wants you to realize the fact that your future rests entirely in your own hands. If you mean to be free, you can be free; if

¹¹⁴ Pal, "Until we get every right, until every liberty will be ours, until in one word we realize the highest destiny of our people as a nation in the committee of nations". *Ibid.*, p. 84.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 88. ¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

¹¹⁷ *The Bande Mataram* published "La Marseillaise" with translations in English, Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Marathi and Gujarati, on 29 July 1907.

you do not mean to be free, you will fall and be forever fallen. So many of you need not like arms, but if you have not the power of active resistance, have you not the power of self-denial and self-abstinence in such a way as not to assist this foreign government to rule over you? This is boycott, we shall not have their goods, we shall not give them assistance to collect revenue and to keep the peace. We shall not assist them in fighting beyond the frontiers or outside India with Indian blood and money. We shall not assist them in carrying on the administration of justice. We shall have our own courts and when the time comes we shall not pay taxes. Can you do that by your united efforts? If you can, you are free from tomorrow."¹¹⁸

Lajpat Rai upheld Swadeshi and Boycott as the religion of new India; the manifestation of self-sacrificing patriotism; the means of moulding a self-reliant Indian nation, and the spearhead of India's national struggle against British rule.¹¹⁹ Discarding the moderates' "sermons of unswerving loyalty", he asserted that it was folly to interpret India's status of political subservience as a beneficial school for political apprenticeship.¹²⁰ To emphasize this assertion, Lajpat Rai offered two scholarships for Punjabi students to study "methods of political work" and stipulated that they should undertake not to seek their career in the Government of India.¹²¹ Outstandingly among Indian leaders, Lajpat Rai stressed the need to arouse the political consciousness of the urban workers and pointed out that "the wage earning classes in this country gradually realize that their destiny and bread is in their own hands and not in the hands of those handful of people who overlord them."¹²²

Implicit in the extremists' rejection of petitions and appeals to the British Government was an underlying rejection of Western values and ideals. Bipin Chandra Pal contrasted the old and the new spirit of Indian patriotism in the following words: "We loved the abstraction we called India but we hated the thing that it ac-

¹¹⁸ "The Tenets of the New Party", speech at Calcutta, 2 January 1907. I.O.L. tract 1010.

¹¹⁹ "The Swadeshi Movement", *Indian Review*, May 1906, pp. 353-356.

¹²⁰ "The National Outlook", *Modern Review*, March 1907, p. 205.

¹²¹ *Punjabee*, 6 and 20 March 1907.

¹²² Home Prog. Political 7590, July 1907.

tually was. Our patriotism was not composed of our love for our own history, literature, arts and industries, culture and institutions, but as a prototype of England which we wished her to be. The new spirit cured us of an imaginary and abstract patriotism. Love of India means a love for its rivers and mountains, for its paddy fields and its arid sandy lands, its towns and villages and poor people, for its languages, literature, philosophies, religion, culture and civilization."¹²³ Pal denied the efficacy of constitutional agitation by arguing that the Government of India was not a constitutional government, in the sense that it rested on its own laws which did not bind it to recognize any constitutional rights of the people it governed.¹²⁴ Like Lajpat Rai, he rejected the moderates' emphasis on the indispensability of political apprenticeship under British guidance, and argued that British rule constituted India's bondage and, as such, could never be a school for freedom.¹²⁵

Having thus rejected the moderates' method of constitutional agitation and in particular its emphasis on apprenticeship under British guidance, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh advocated boycott in the form of 'passive resistance'. Pal defined passive resistance as "non aggressive active resistance" or "even the determination to allow a man to beat you is the activity of one's will power."¹²⁶ While Aurobindo Ghosh defined it as "lawful abstention from any kind of co-operation with the Government."¹²⁷

Outlining the practical form of passive resistance, Aurobindo Ghosh urged boycott of British goods and the sole use of Swadeshi; boycott of Government controlled schools and the establishment of independent schools teaching "national education"; boycott of courts of law and the administration of justice through popular arbitration; and lastly, boycott of Government offices, police and army and the establishment of a "national league of

¹²³ "The New Patriotism", speech at Madras, April 1907, B. C. Pal, *Swadeshi and Swaraj* (Selection from Pal's writings and speeches during 1902-1907) Calcutta 1956, p. 9.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 133. ¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

¹²⁶ "The New Movement", speech at Madras, April 1907; B. C. Pal, *Swadeshi and Swaraj*, p. 79.

¹²⁷ Aurobindo Ghosh, *The Doctrine of Passive Resistance* (first published in *Bande Mataram*, 9-23 April 1907) Pondicherry 1948, p. 40.

defence".¹²⁸ The double-edged purpose of passive resistance thus aimed to paralyze the executive functions of the Government and to foster a self-sustained popular system of administration.

Although Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh were unanimous in disparaging the methods of the moderates, they differed in projecting the ultimate aim of Indian self-government.

Tilak explained self-government as the possession of Indian control over the administrative machinery,¹²⁹ but he by no means advocated the severance of India from the British Empire. "Our remote ideal", he declared, "is a confederacy of the Indian provinces possessing colonial self-government with all imperial questions set apart for the central government in England."¹³⁰ His dispute with the moderates was limited to the application of different methods of agitation but he conceived the same goal as that of the moderates—a self-governing India within the Empire.¹³¹ While the moderates looked forward to a limited target of Colonial self-government, Tilak projected the ideal of Swaraj, yet he was at pains to explain its exact political meaning and confessed "at this stage it could not be determined what form of self-government we wished, it will be decided in thirteen or fourteen years hence."¹³² He could better define Swaraj by emphasizing that it meant neither the expulsion of Englishmen, nor breaking away from the Empire.¹³³ Above all, he advocated continued loyalty to the Crown.¹³⁴ For all the image of Tilak as "the father of Indian unrest", his imprisonment in 1908 did not check the spread of terrorism, while on his release in 1914, he strongly condemned acts of terrorism, praised the "inestimable benefits which British rule conferred upon India by its civilized methods of administration", and called upon Indians to support England in the war.¹³⁵

On the other hand, Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal and Auro-

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

¹²⁹ "The Tenets of the New Party", speech at Calcutta, 2 January 1907, I.O.L. Tract 1010.

¹³⁰ Henry Nevinston, *The New Spirit in India*, London 1908, p. 72.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹³² "Our present situation", speech at Allahabad, 4 January 1907, I.O.L. Tract 1010.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *Indian Review*, September 1914, p. 719.

bindo Ghosh rejected the methods of the moderates as well as their aim of Colonial self-government. For them, conciliation between Indian patriotism and loyalty to the Empire was anathema, and the ideal of self-governing India within the Empire a contradiction between two incompatible entities. "How can a subject race governed by another be patriotic towards its rulers?" asked Lajpat Rai.¹³⁶ He condemned Indians who celebrated 'Empire Day' as "hypocrites who dragged Indian patriotism into the mire",¹³⁷ and bitterly denounced Indians who hankered after British honorary titles as "whited sepulchres full of rotting corruption; the symptoms and disease of the national organism; the morbid parasitic cells which develop mean selfishness and thrive on favouritism."¹³⁸ While the moderates polarized stability and anarchy, Lajpat Rai justified unrest as an essential harbinger of progress, and emphasized that India's release from political slavery necessitated her going through a "hell of unrest".¹³⁹ In 1914 Lajpat Rai praised acts of terrorism as "expressions of genuine passion for national liberty"¹⁴⁰ and, unlike any other Indian leader, asserted that Indians should not support England in the war as mercenaries.¹⁴¹

Bipin Chandra Pal denied the feasibility of a self-governing India within the Empire on the grounds that India constituted the pillar of the Empire and therefore could exert effective self-government only if the Empire itself ceased to exist.¹⁴² In addition, Pal emphasized the racial division and expressed his conviction that Indians could never exercise self-government within a larger political framework which included Englishmen, Australians and Canadians.¹⁴³ On the basis of these contentions Pal advocated Swaraj in terms of "autonomous Government, absolutely free

¹³⁶ "Indian patriotism towards the Empire", *Indian Review*, January 1907, p. 52.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ "Title hunters", *Punjabee*, 27 January 1907.

¹³⁹ "Political work in the Punjab", *Punjabee*, 13 October 1906, Home Prog. 7590, July 1907.

¹⁴⁰ Lajpat Rai, *Autobiography*.

¹⁴¹ *Tribune*, 14 November 1929. "Congress Politics in 1914".

¹⁴² "The New Movement", speech at Madras, April 1907. B. C. Pal, *Swadeshi and Swaraj*, p. 29.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

from British control".¹⁴⁴ He visualized the ideal of a self-governing India as a federation which was comprised of republican states and constitutional monarchies in a democratic United States of India.¹⁴⁵ In projecting this ideal, Pal approvingly envisaged a transition period of inner conflict which entailed the imposition of dictatorship and the temporary abandonment of democracy.¹⁴⁶

Aurobindo Ghosh gave the clearest exposition of Swaraj by declaring it synonymous with independence—"a free national Government unhampered even in the least degree by foreign control."¹⁴⁷ To him, arguments about the liberalization of Legislative Councils or the wider admission of Indians to the Civil Service were futile and irrelevant. He upheld the view that the more reactionary the Government of India, the more it stimulated Indians to abandon their acquiescence, and the more it spurred them to revolt. He justified revolution against British rule partly on the grounds that "liberty is the life birth of a nation and when the life is attacked by violent pressure, any and every means of self-preservation became right";¹⁴⁸ but, more importantly, on the grounds that it was essential for Indians to go through a revolution in order to purge themselves of western tutelage. To launch the revolution, Aurobindo Ghosh advocated the creation of a "central force" to represent "the national will". In his words, "There can be no genuine progress carrying the whole nation forward unless there is a central force representing either the best thought and energy of the country or else the majority of its citizens and able to enforce the views and decisions of the nation on all its constituent members."¹⁴⁹ Or in short, "National reforms and national progress needs the organization of the national will in a strong central authority."¹⁵⁰ Unlike Bipin Chandra Pal, he avoided the term dictatorship, yet his idea of the "central force" representing the "national will" harbours the elements of dictatorship. Moreover, he conceived the ultimate aim of India's national emancipation as "a sacrifice to the Motherland, offered in feeding her fire, even with the blood, lives and happiness of our nearest and dearest."¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

¹⁴⁷ Aurobindo Ghosh, *The Doctrine of Passive Resistance* (first published in *Bande Mataram*, 9-23 April 1907), Pondicherry 1948, p. 17.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

The general state of unrest in the Punjab during February to June 1907 provided a testing ground for the ideas of the extremists.

The discontent in the Punjab emanated from the legislation of the Colonization Bill,¹⁵² and from the proposed increase of the Bari Doab Canal water rate. The Chenab Colony had been settled by pensioned Jat Sepoys who received free grants of irrigated lands. In accordance with the Hindu practice of inheritance, by which sons inherited property in equal shares, land was constantly subdivided and became too small to support the Colonizers' growing families. To check further deterioration, the Colonization Bill provided inheritance by primogeniture as well as uniformity in erecting buildings, planting trees, and maintaining improved sanitation. The Bill was strongly resented by the settlers. They regarded it as infringement of their rights of tenure and suspected concealed intentions to confiscate their lands. Above all, plague was taking an average toll of 6,000 deaths per week.

The discontent was intensified by racial animosity which was ignited by the prosecution of the *Punjabee* for publishing an article¹⁵³ in which the accidental shooting of an Indian Shikari by the District Officer of Rawalpindi was described as a deliberate murder. While the *Punjabee* was prosecuted, no similar action was taken against the *Civil and Military Gazette* which published letters that incited worse racial antagonism.¹⁵⁴ The proprietor of the *Punjabee*, Jaswant Rai, was sentenced in Lahore to two years imprisonment, and the editor, Athalye, to six months imprisonment, for "fomenting race hatred".¹⁵⁵

Although Lajpat Rai succeeded in securing their release on bail,

¹⁵² Published in the *Punjabi Public Gazette* on 1 November 1906.

¹⁵³ On 11 April 1906.

¹⁵⁴ Sir Denzil Ibbetson, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, admitted that the prosecution of the *Punjabee* was a blunder and that the *Civil and Military Gazette* incited worse racial hatred. Minute Home Prog. 7590, 30 April 1907. Minto to Morley, 2 May 1907, "They were disgracefully low in tone, just the sort of thing to stir up racial hatred. The Punjab Government decided not to prosecute and would not allow private prosecution. They may have been right, but it makes one's blood boil to know that a leading English newspaper could publish such productions", Mary Countess of Minto, *India: Minto and Morley*, p. 123.

¹⁵⁵ *Tribune*, 16 February 1907.

their sentence provoked a riot in Lahore. The house of the District Magistrate was attacked and damaged, Europeans passing by were abused and manhandled, while the released prisoners were hailed with cries of "Bande Mataram", "Death to the enemy".¹⁵⁶ The tone of the prevailing atmosphere was expressed by the *Vakil* of Amritsar in the following rallying cry, "Indians! Consider the injustice done to the *Punjabee*. Indians! Strike for independence. Arm yourselves and form secret societies. Seize arms and drive the tyrants from the soil of India."¹⁵⁷

Throughout March, April and May 1907, public meetings in protest against the Colonization Bill were held in Lahore, Rawalpindi, Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Lyallpur, as well as in surrounding villages. On 22 March, Lajpat Rai addressed a mass meeting of peasants in Lyallpur in which he thus challenged the legitimate ownership of land by the Government, "Whence did the Government bring these lands? the blood of *our* forefathers was shed on it, *we* conquered it and inhabited it, these lands are therefore either ours or God's Government officials are servants to serve us and not to rule over us. Do not fear the jails nor death."¹⁵⁸

Ajit Singh¹⁵⁹ impressed upon the same meeting that three hundred million Indians could easily defeat the hundred and fifty thousand Englishmen in India in spite of their guns, and urged the peasants to revolt.¹⁶⁰

In Rawalpindi a mass meeting on 21 April was presided over by Hans Raj and addressed by Ajit Singh who urged Muslims and Hindus to unite and fight the Government to death.¹⁶¹ When Hans Raj, Ajit Singh and three other organizers of the meeting were summoned for trial on 2 May, a riot spread in Rawalpindi in which the District Judge was barely rescued from crowds armed with sticks shouting "beat the Europeans, kill any you meet",

¹⁵⁶ Lajpat Rai, *Autobiography*. ¹⁵⁷ P.N.N.R. *Vakil*, 7 March 1907.

¹⁵⁸ *Punjabee*, 2 March 1907, Home Prog. 7590, July 1907, Appendix E.

¹⁵⁹ He was a former student at the Dayananda Anglo-Vedic College; was present in the 1906 Congress and supported the extremists section; organized in Lahore a "Bharat Mata" (Mother India) revolutionary society; approached Lajpat Rai for financial support for its activities but was refused. Lajpat Rai, *Autobiography*, also Home Prog. 7590, July 1907.

¹⁶⁰ Home Prog. 7590, July 1907. ¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, No. 28.

while the house of the District Commissioner was attacked and Englishmen passing by were manhandled. During the riot Lajpat Rai was approached by a Pathan who told him that a Sikh regiment was awaiting his orders.¹⁶²

The Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab, E. Mac-lagan, informed Sir H. Risley, Secretary to the Government of India, that although Ajit Singh was at the forefront of the agitation, Lajpat Rai was the more dangerous revolutionary leader who was generally recognized as the chief organizer and the moving spirit of the whole agitation.¹⁶³ In his request for special powers to check the agitation, Sir Denzil Ibbetson, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, reported that the peasants were incited to murder high officials and rise against the Government, that the Arya Samaj was the chief promoter of the agitation, and that attempts were made to tamper with the Sikh army units. He urged the Government of India to realize the "exceedingly dangerous situation" and requested its approval to prohibit all public meetings and to deport Ajit Singh and Lajpat Rai.¹⁶⁴

In view of the fact that the agitation in the Punjab coincided with the 50th anniversary of the Mutiny, Lord Minto promptly sanctioned the proposed deportation as well as the prohibition of all public meetings. On the other hand, the Viceroy vetoed the Punjab Colonization Bill on the grounds that "it was a very faulty piece of legislation".¹⁶⁵

The withholding of the Colonization Bill proved the major reason for the restoration of calm in the Punjab, while the deportation of Ajit Singh and Lajpat Rai acted as the immediate deterrent which enervated and abated the agitation.

On the day of his deportation to Burma, 9 May 1907, Lajpat Rai's article in the *Punjabee* "On the political situation" concluded with the following challenge to the Government, "Do what you may to crush or kill it [the agitation], fear will give way to the desire of martyrdom, and arrests will speed up the national awa-

¹⁶² Lajpat Rai, *Autobiography*.

¹⁶³ Home Prog. 7590, No. 695, 3 May 1907.

¹⁶⁴ Minute of Sir Denzil Ibbetson, Home Prog. 7590 No. 1, 30 April 1907.

¹⁶⁵ Minto to Morley, 16 May 1907; Mary, Countess of Minto, *India: Minto and Morley*, p. 132.

kening"; yet his deportation resulted in a general demonstration of submissive loyalty to the Government.

In an open letter to the *Civil and Military Gazette*, forty-two prominent Punjabi lawyers and leaders of the Arya Samaj, including Hans Raj, declared that they "disassociated themselves from, and expressed their emphatic disapproval of, all methods of political agitation which tend to promote disloyalty, sedition, or disorder."¹⁶⁶

The same forty-two leaders apologetically wrote again, "We as members of the Arya Samaj and as subjects of the British Government, strongly disapprove of the conduct of fanatics, and declare that we have no sympathy with these doings. It is unfortunate that Lala Lajpat Rai and Lala Hans Raj and Gurudas Ram—prominent members of the Arya Samaj—have been suspected of unconstitutional agitation. We believe they were advocates of constitutional agitation only, and that sedition had no place in their minds. We pray their innocence will be proved to the satisfaction of the Government."¹⁶⁷ On the other hand, letters of congratulation on Lajpat Rai's deportation were sent to the *Civil and Military Gazette* by elated Muslims.¹⁶⁸ The *Azad* and *Watan* published extracts from Lajpat Rai's speeches to demonstrate his guilt of sedition,¹⁶⁹ while a letter to the *Akhbar-i-Am* read, "The sooner such enemies of India are wiped out the better for the country".¹⁷⁰

The Anglo-Indians' reaction to the agitation and to Lajpat Rai's deportation was expressed by the following letter to the *Civil and Military Gazette*: "We must hold the country with the power of the sword and in the interests of our women and children and the Empire we must see that the edge of the sword is not dulled. . . . The only thing an oriental respects is power."¹⁷¹

In contrast, the *Sandhya* saw Lajpat Rai's deportation as the first sacrificial offering to "the Mother" and added, "Fifty years ago the Sepoys sounded the war drum and the blood of the feringhi flowed on the soil of India. Exactly fifty years have gone by since

¹⁶⁶ *Civil and Military Gazette*, 11 June 1907.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 12 June 1907. ¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 11 May 1907.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 28 June 1907. ¹⁷⁰ P.N.N.R., *Akhbar-i-Am*, 6 August 1907.

¹⁷¹ *Civil and Military Gazette*, 12 June 1907.

then and again the deep sounds of that war drum are being heard again."¹⁷²

Yet this was the exception. In general, the Indian Press expressed indignation, but its protest went only to the extent of arguing that Lajpat Rai should have been allowed to defend himself under trial. The *Indian Mirror* termed the extremists "a microscopic minority" and concluded that their influence was greatly exaggerated since the majority of the people proved to be unaffected by their inflammatory speeches and writings.¹⁷³

In view of this general submissive reaction, it becomes apparent that the extremists' advocacy of revolution was premature, lacking practical support. The anti-partition agitation in Bengal and the unrest in the Punjab contained revolutionary elements which were far more militant than the relatively crude agitation during the Ilbert Bill controversy in 1883; yet, in spite of the fact that by 1907 the nascent nationalist movement was fanned by religious fervour and spurred by racial animosity as well as by economic distress and by political frustration, there was no Indian revolution.

Apart from the obvious reason that the military strength of the Government posed a formidable deterrent, while in contrast the extremists had neither the resources nor the organization which could sustain a revolution, the main cause may be attributed to the political apathy of the peasantry, but more precisely to the fact that authoritative leadership centred in the Congress, and the Congress was dominated by moderates who abhorred the prospect of a revolution. The Congress formed and represented a class of professional men whose political career, economic prosperity, and social prestige were either dependent on or directly linked with the existing institutions of the Government; their struggle was designed to increase their association with the Government, not to jeopardize their vested interests in a struggle against the Government. Hence the application of militant agitation instead of constitutional agitation had to be first fought out in the Congress itself, before it could have been effectively directed against the Government. In other words, the extremists had first to capture the Congress in order to invest their militant ideas with an aura of authority which would attract a wider following.

Aurobindo Ghosh justified the impending clash on the grounds

¹⁷² B.N.N.R. *Sandhya*, 17 May 1907. ¹⁷³ *Indian Mirror*, 18 June 1907.

that the political struggle of subjugated people demanded inner struggle rather than an appearance of fictitious unity. He relied on the examples of the Italian and American revolutions and concluded that in the struggle between the moderates and the extremists, "one or the other must be crushed or prevail before true unity of a regenerated nation can replace the false unity of acquiescence in servitude."¹⁷⁴

The candidature for the presidency of the twenty-third session of the Congress signalled the contest for the leadership of the Congress. The extremists proposed Lajpat Rai who had been released¹⁷⁵ on 15 November, while the moderates nominated Rash Behari Ghosh. Although Lajpat Rai refused to contest the presidency,¹⁷⁶ the extremists persisted in opposing the nomination of Rash Behari Ghosh.

Towards the approach of the session at Surat, Aurobindo Ghosh called upon the extremists to counter the "Bombay Loyalists" and set up a separate "Nationalists Conference".¹⁷⁷ Accordingly, the first Indian Nationalist Conference was held in Haripur at the outskirts of Surat on 23 December 1907. It was presided over by Aurobindo Ghosh and addressed by Tilak. Entrance to the Nationalists Conference was conditioned upon personal declaration of being a "Nationalist", while the Conference itself passed resolutions on total boycott and complete independence.¹⁷⁸

Although the extremists' Nationalists Conference posed a consolidated front, it contained two distinct groups; one led by Tilak, who repudiated any intentions to cause a split in the Congress,¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁴ *Bande Mataram*, 27 October 1907.

¹⁷⁵ Minto to Morley, 5 November 1907, "As to Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh, I have not a shadow of doubt that we must in common justice release them, and that the sooner we do so the better. Now that we have declared the Punjab to be quiet we cannot justify their further imprisonment." Mary, Countess of Minto, *India: Minto and Morley*, p. 163.

¹⁷⁶ "I will be the last person to allow myself to be made the reason or occasion of any split in the national camp." *Indian Review*, December 1907, p. 960.

¹⁷⁷ *Bande Mataram*, 13 December 1907.

¹⁷⁸ *Bengalee*, 25 December 1907.

¹⁷⁹ Tilak emphasized in his speech at the Nationalists Conference "We have not come to cause a split in the Congress, we do not want to hold a separate Congress, our policy is not destructive but progressive." *The Surat*

the other led by Aurobindo Ghosh, who sought to capture the Congress or wreck it.¹⁸⁰

On the other hand, the undelivered presidential address of Rash Behari Ghosh reveals that the moderates approvingly anticipated the secession of the extremists from the Congress.¹⁸¹ Moreover, the decision of Pherozeshah Mehta to bring into the Congress pavilion forty hired men armed with sticks, indicates predetermination to expel the extremists.¹⁸² Above all, the mild formulation of the draft resolutions on Swadeshi, Boycott, and National Education, signified the Congress' rebuke to the ideas of the extremists and its determination to appease the Government.

The resolution on Swadeshi replaced the crucial clause "even at some sacrifice" by "preference where possible"; the Boycott resolution omitted the term "Boycott Movement", and the resolution on National Education excluded the words "education on national lines and under national control".¹⁸³

The rupture started on the first day of the Surat session, 26 December 1907, when Banerjea formally introduced the president-elect, Rash Behari Ghosh. Tumultuous hisses and shouts deafened Banerjea's speech and the general meeting had to be suspended. On the following day, Tilak opposed the installation of Rash Behari Ghosh in the presidential chair. Having been declared out of order by N. Malvi, Chairman of the Reception Committee, Tilak demanded an amendment to delay the election of the pre-

Congress—A unique collection of letters, articles and reports. Madras 1908, I.O.L. Tract 1042.

¹⁸⁰ Aurobindo Ghosh, *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother*, Pondicherry 1953, p. 47.

¹⁸¹ "The National Congress is definitely committed only to constitutional methods of agitation to which it is fast moored. If the new party does not approve of such methods and cannot work harmoniously with the old, it has no place within the pale of the Congress. Secession, therefore, is the only course open to it." *The Surat Congress*. Natesan, Madras 1908, Presidential address, p. 29. Referring to Lajpat Rai's deportation, Rash Behari Ghosh added "though a martyr may be worshipped for his sufferings and his sacrifices, he is not always counted among the wisest of men and his example is more frequently admired than followed." *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁸² *The Congress Split*, Calcutta 1908, p. 12. I.O.L. Tract 1042.

¹⁸³ *The Surat Congress 1907*. A Unique Collection of letters, articles and reports intended to give a more exact history of the fiasco than any published hitherto. Madras 1908, pp. 22-24. I.O.L. Tract 1042.

sident, but was declared out of order by Rash Behari Ghosh. When Tilak then appealed to the delegates, an uproar and general scuffle ensued. The police was called and the twenty-third Indian National Congress dispersed in chaos.

Although Tilak's objection to the election of the president sparked off the uproar, Tilak was by no means responsible for the split of the Congress. He regretted the outbreak and believed that it was "accidental and unexpected".¹⁸⁴

The following admission of Aurobindo Ghosh provides the clue, "Very few people know that it was I, (without consulting Tilak), who gave the order that led to the breaking of the Congress."¹⁸⁵

Following the dissolution of the Congress, Pherozeshah Mehta, Dinshaw Wacha, Rash Behari Ghosh, Gokhale and Banerjea announced their decision to hold an exclusive Convention of the moderate party. In an attempt to forestall the Convention, Tilak approached Banerjea with a compromising suggestion. He proposed to waive his opposition to Rash Behari Ghosh's election provided the resolutions on Swadeshi, Boycott and National Education retained their 1906 formulation. In return, Banerjea stipulated to Tilak the following unconditional public apology, "I and my party beg to withdraw in the best interests of the Congress our opposition to Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh's presidency and regret the incident that took place."¹⁸⁶ Tilak concurred, providing Banerjea agreed to walk out from the Congress in the event that the resolutions were carried in their milder form. Banerjea refused and the negotiations broke down.¹⁸⁷

Lajpat Rai implored the moderates not to oust the extremists and thereby offer them to Government persecution.¹⁸⁸ In a last minute attempt he tried to persuade Gokhale to postpone the meeting of the Convention. Gokhale rejected the possibility of finding a compromise and the Convention met on 28 December 1907 at the Congress pavilion.

¹⁸⁴ H. Nevins, *The New Spirit in India*, p. 243.

¹⁸⁵ Aurobindo Ghosh, *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother*, p. 81.

¹⁸⁶ *The Surat Congress*, I.O.L. Tract 1042, p. 26.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹⁸⁸ Lajpat Rai's speech at the All-India Swadeshi Conference, Surat, December 1907. *The Indian Nation Builders*, p. 348.

Nine hundred delegates attended the moderates' Convention which passed the following resolutions:

- (1) The attainment by India of Self-Government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Empire and participation by her in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with those members—is the goal of our political aspirations.
- (2) The advance towards this goal is to be by strictly constitutional means, by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration, by promoting national unity and fostering public spirit, and by improving the condition of the mass of the people.
- (3) All meetings held for the promotion of the aims and objects above indicated must be conducted in an orderly manner with due submission to the authority of those entrusted with the power to control their procedure.¹⁸⁹

On the other hand, three hundred extremists met under the presidency of Aurobindo Ghosh and reiterated the 1906 resolutions on Swadeshi, Boycott, National Education and Self-government.¹⁹⁰ The extremists' meeting appointed a committee to outline future plans, yet it did not issue cohesive directions, and it never met again.

The moderates' Convention reassembled under the name of the All-India Conference with Banerjea as its chairman, and appointed a committee to reconstitute the Congress. The Committee (which consisted of Pherozeshah Mehta, Dinshaw Wacha, Rash Behari Ghosh and Banerjea) met in April 1908 at Allahabad and drew a rigid constitution for the Congress.¹⁹¹ It specified that the object of the Indian National Congress was the attainment of self-government within the British Empire, to be achieved strictly by constitutional means and by gradual reform of the existing system of administration.¹⁹² Every delegate to the Congress had

¹⁸⁹ *The Surat Congress*, I.O.L. Tract 1042. Appendix I, "The Convention".

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, Appendix IV, "The Meeting of the Extremists".

¹⁹¹ *Indian Review*, May 1908, p. 400.

¹⁹² *The Indian National Congress*, Natesan, Madras 1911, Appendix B, Article I.

to express in writing his acceptance of this article of faith of the Congress.¹⁹³ In addition, the Constitution laid down disciplinary rules which ensured the exclusion of rebellious members from the Congress.¹⁹⁴

In November 1908, Pherozeshah Mehta disclaimed any intentions of receiving the extremists back into the Congress. He emphasized that the cleavage was irreparable and that it became obligatory for the Congress to purge itself of all elements that marred its loyalty to the Government.¹⁹⁵

Above all, A. O. Hume and W. Wedderburn sent the following message of congratulation: "The objects and methods of the Congress set forth in Article One of the constitution, are precisely those with which our movement started when we inaugurated it at the first Bombay Congress in December 1885."¹⁹⁶

The Congress had thus proved and fulfilled its safety-valve function.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, Article II. ¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, Rules 25, 26, 27.

¹⁹⁵ Mehta's letter to Bhupendranath Basu, *Indian Review*, November 1908, p. 808.

¹⁹⁶ *Indian Review*, December 1908, p. 968.

CHAPTER V

THE CONGRESS ADrift, AND CAPTURED BY THE EXTREMISTS 1908-1920

IN HIS PRESIDENTIAL address to the twenty-fourth Congress—or more accurately, the first exclusively moderates' Congress—Rash Behari Ghosh explained the absence of the extremists in the following words: "Those who have gone out of us, were never of us, for if they had been of us they would no doubt have continued with us."¹ He held the extremists responsible for their "political suicide" and emphasized that since the Congress was dedicated to its principle of constitutional agitation, it refused at Surat "to purchase unity at the price of principle and loyalty."² He further emphasized that the Congress "could not and dared not extend the hand of fellowship" to the extremists as long as they persisted in their policy of disloyalty.

The key-note of the 1908 moderates' Congress was its expression of gratitude for the proposed reforms in the Government of India which had been announced two weeks before the Congress convened.³ The reforms, which were embodied in the Indian Councils Act of 1909, enlarged the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils; conceded non-official majorities (of nominated and elected members together) while retaining the official majority in the Centre; and allowed members of the Councils to move resolutions and ask supplementary questions. Two nominated Indians were appointed to the Council of the Secretary of State for India, and one to the Executive Council of the Viceroy. Above all, the reforms recognized the principle of election to the enlarged Legislative Councils, though not through constituencies but through the expanded representation of municipal and district boards, univer-

¹ *Report of the twenty-fourth I.N.C. Madras 1908*, p. 34. ² *Ibid.*

³ Morley introduced the Indian Reform Bill in the House of Lords on 17 December 1908. The lengthy development of the reforms is discussed in Mary, Countess of Minto, *India: Minto and Morley*, Chapters IX-XIV, and in Morley's *Recollections*, Vol. II, Book V, Chapters I-V. See also S. R. Wasti, *Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement*, Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1962.

sities, chambers of commerce, landholders' associations; and, most portentous, they gave the Muslims special electorates.

Expressing the deep satisfaction of the Congress for the proposed reforms, Banerjea described them as "the crowning triumph of constitutional agitation."⁴ He exalted Morley as "the author of Parliament in India"⁵ and expressed his belief that the reforms would lead to Indian Colonial Self-Government. Gokhale summed up Congressmen's feelings as follows: "Hitherto we have been engaged in what might be called responsible association with the administration. From agitation to responsible association, and from responsible association—a long and weary step but the step will have to come—to responsible administration."⁶

Yet these interpretations of the reforms were in complete contrast with the ideas of their authors. Both Minto and Morley were convinced that their reforms could by no means lead to the establishment of a parliamentary system in India, nor that they could be regarded as a step forward towards Indian self-government. Minto wrote: "I am no advocate of 'representative government for India' in the Western sense of the term. It could never be akin to the instincts of the many races composing the population of the Indian Empire. It would be a Western importation unnatural to Eastern tastes."⁷ While Morley explicitly remarked, "If it could be said that this chapter of reforms led directly or necessarily to the establishment of a parliamentary system in India, I for one would have nothing to do with it."⁸ Notwithstanding Morley's liberal convictions, his image of India was that of a vast country, populated by 300 million people—composite, heterogeneous, with different histories, belonging to different races and divided by different religions.⁹ Hence his evaluation of the national aspirations of Indians was not in the same category as his appreciation of Irish demands for Home Rule. To him, India was far away in the East while Ireland was a part of the United Kingdom.¹⁰ Similarly, he rejected the supposition that India could have self-

⁴ *Report of the twenty-fourth I.N.C. Madras 1908*, p. 48.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 49. ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

⁷ Minto to his wife, 21 March 1907, Mary, Countess of Minto, *India: Minto and Morley*, p. 110.

⁸ Morley, *Indian Speeches*, London 1909, pp. 91-92, speech at House of Lords on 7 December 1908.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 18, speech at House of Commons on 6 June 1907. ¹⁰ *Ibid.*

government similar to that of Canada in terms of "a thoroughly dangerous and hollowest fallacy."¹¹ Since Morley did not recognize the Indians as a nation, he did not think it "desirable or possible, or even conceivable, to adopt English political institutions to the nations who inhabit India."¹² Yet his liberal convictions led him to add that the introduction to India of "the *spirit* of English institutions is a different thing which we cannot escape. . . . Cast-iron bureaucracy won't go on for ever."¹³ On 7 October 1908 he exclaimed, "What are we in India for? Surely in order to implant—slowly, prudently, judiciously—those ideas of justice, law, humanity, which are the foundation of our own civilization."¹⁴

Morley's inclination to veer towards a more liberal appreciation of Indians' aspirations was deterred by two factors—the pressure of Englishmen in India, and the revolutionary aspect of the Indian agitation in the Punjab and Bengal. When Minto referred to the appointment of an Indian Member to the Viceroy's Executive Council, Morley replied: "The fear of reawakening the uproar of the Ilbert Bill days, and so reviving racial antipathy, will be a powerful factor in most minds, as I know it has been in yours and is in mine."¹⁵ During May 1907 Minto's report on the agitation in the Punjab and Bengal indicated the possibility of a revolutionary outbreak,¹⁶ adding that his information from Calcutta pointed to "a nervous hysterical Anglo-Indian feelings . . . the beginning of much of the same feelings which it is not pleasant to read of in Lord Canning's time during the Mutiny."¹⁷ To which Morley replied: "You may be sure of my firm support, even if the sternest things should unluckily be needed. It may turn out that you will need that support not only against sedition-mongers, but also against your 'law-and-order' people who are responsible for at least as much fooleries in history as the revolutionists are. . . . But you know the ground too well in Pall Mall and Westminster, and the City of London, for me to need to draw a picture of the forces that will wax active in the various

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

¹² Morley's *Recollections*, Vol. II, Book V, p. 172. ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 209, and Mary, Countess of Minto, *India: Minto and Morley*, p. 112, 12 April 1907.

¹⁶ Mary, Countess of Minto, *India: Minto and Morley*, p. 123.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

directions.”¹⁸ The acts of terrorism during December 1907 to December 1908¹⁹ further heightened the fears of Englishmen in India and prompted Minto to request Morley’s sanction for repressive measures. Describing the situation to Morley, Minto wrote: “There are European elements in this country capable of self-restraint up to a certain point only, and if there are further outrages we shall have a European outcry creating a position far worse to deal with than the present attempts at anarchy.”²⁰ And again, “One cannot but feel that the atmosphere of every day life is electrically inflamed . . . if some outrage upon a European is perpetrated in the planters’ districts, for instance, I should not be at all surprised at lynching, and some mad action may easily set things in a blaze.”²¹ In November he wrote: “What I am always afraid of is . . . that the European population may be panic-stricken and make an attempt to take the law into its own hands. There is already a hint of this in the *Englishman* suggesting ‘organization for self-defence’. . . . I am afraid that European public confidence may become dangerously shaken unless we adopt some new machinery. . . .”²² There is a great deal of nervousness everywhere, even ladies are buying revolvers.”²³

In view of this emergency, Minto prevailed upon Morley to delay the announcement of the reforms in Parliament until the Viceroy’s Council passed the repressive legislation and explained, “We must give the medicine first and then do all we can to take the taste away.”²⁴

In June 1908, the Newspaper Act had been passed, which gave

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 128-129, and Morley’s *Recollections*, Vol. II, Book V, pp. 215-216.

¹⁹ On 7 December 1907, an attempt by bomb was made to derail the train of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir Andrew Frazer. On 23 December 1907, Mr. Allen, formerly District Magistrate of Dacca, was shot. On 31 April 1908, a bomb intended to kill Mr. Kingsford, District Judge of Muzaffarpur, missed his carriage but killed two ladies, Mrs. and Miss Kennedy. The sub-inspector of police who arrested their assassin—Khurdiram Bose—was shot dead in Calcutta on 9 November 1908. *Rowlatt Report*, pp. 21-23.

²⁰ Mary, Countess of Minto, *India: Minto and Morley*, p. 234, 28 May 1908.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 247-8, 5 August 1908.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 251, 12 November 1908.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 255, 30 November 1908.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

power to the Government to confiscate presses used for publishing newspapers that incited sedition. In July 1908, Tilak was sentenced to six years imprisonment for his articles in the *Kesari* which excused the murders of Mrs. and Miss Kennedy. In October Brahma Bandhab Upadhyay and Bipin Chandra Pal were imprisoned for seditious writings. Aurobindo Ghosh was jailed from May 1908 to May 1909 during his trial in connection with an article on the Muzaffarpur murder.

Yet, since the existing machinery of justice was considered too slow to deal with the growth of terrorism, Minto introduced the Criminal Law Amendment Act on 11 December 1908 to his Council, which passed it in a single day. It provided for speedy prosecution without jury and prohibited unauthorized public meetings. Two days later, ten Bengali leaders, among them Aswini Kumar Dutta, Satish Chandra Chatterjee, and Shyam Sunder Chakravarti, were deported.

Thus, in December 1908, repression and reform were enforced and granted at the same time to suppress the extremists and to rally the moderates.²⁵ Thus too, the 1908 moderates' Congress expressed its "most sincere and grateful thanks" to Morley and Minto for the reforms,²⁶ while it also condemned the acts of terrorism,²⁷ and petitioned against the repressive legislations²⁸ in the same breath.

Having discarded the extremists, and having enforced the disciplinary rules of its constitution, the Congress became an inanimate body. Furthermore, the Indian Councils Act of 1909 deprived the Congress of its main demand—the representation of Indians in the Councils—and thus took the wind out of its sails. Until 1909, the Congress fulfilled the task of criticizing the Government of India from without, and, inasmuch as the Government paid heed to that criticism, it regarded the Congress (at best) as a body which provided a means whereby it became aware of what educated Indians were thinking. From 1909, the enlarged Councils became the advisory bodies. Many Congressmen became Honourable Members of the Councils. They were now in a posi-

²⁵ Morley, *Recollections*, Vol. II, Book V, pp. 266, 282, 319.

²⁶ *Report of the twenty-fourth I.N.C. Madras 1908*, Resolution II.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Resolution III. ²⁸ *Ibid.*, Resolutions X and XI.

tion to criticize measures of the Government from within; though still without exercising effective control over the policy of the Government. Consequently, their speeches in the Congress merely echoed their speeches in the Councils. From 1908 to 1910 the number of delegates to the Congress dropped,²⁹ while its proceedings aroused little interest in the Congress movement itself, or in the country.³⁰ By 1908 Swadeshi and Boycott had spent their force.³¹ A pamphlet by S. Sankaranarayana—signed “the grateful Indian patriot”—advocated the replacement of the slogan “Bande Mataram” by that of “Bande Matapitarau” (hail to the Mother-Father; Mātā—Mother India, Pitā—Father England). It depicted England as the guru of India—the source of modern education and influences which taught Indians the idea of patriotism—and recommended “Bande Matapitarau” as a broader concept which expressed at once both Indian patriotism and loyalty to England in a spirit of harmony between India and England, instead of the chauvinistic cry of “Bande Mataram”.³²

As an aftermath to the affray in Surat, P. Chandra Roy, editor of the *Indian World* wrote: “We must realize the ideal of discipline *before* we can hope to realize the greater ideal of Swaraj.”³³ But in 1911 he observed that because of its rigid constitution, the Congress had become an exclusive organization which “degenerated into a mere platform for glib oratory and claptrap declamation.”³⁴

Yet the Congress adhered to its creed which was re-emphasized by Bhupendranath Basu thus, “We desire self-government not by revolution but by gradual evolution and we are prepared to advance steadily and surely, though it may only be slowly.”³⁵ Gokhale expressed the hope in October 1908 that in ten years time, Indians will attain provincial self-government and explained, “It is no

²⁹ 617 in 1908; 243 in 1909; 636 in 1910.

³⁰ C. Y. Chintamani, *Indian Politics Since the Mutiny*, p. 84.

³¹ V. G. Kale, “The Breakdown of Boycott”, *Indian Review*, June 1908, p. 893.

³² S. Sankaranarayana, *Bande Matapitarau*. Madras 1908, I.O.L. Tract 1050.

³³ “The Lesson of Surat”, *Indian World*, January 1908, p. 103.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, July 1911, p. 109.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, January 1908, “The Indian Political Outlook”, p. 5.

use trying to overthrow the present administration before we have something to put in its place.”³⁶

On the other hand, Aurobindo Ghosh protested: “Nations that became free did not first convince themselves to be helots and then seek freedom. They denied they were servile, they laid down they were free, would become free, and became free.”³⁷ He contended that English political ideas of democracy were centred on materialism, and that the English temper and culture were the very antipodes of Indian temper and culture. Hence he concluded, “If India is to model herself on the Anglo-Saxon type she must first kill everything in her which is her own.”³⁸ He blamed the moderates for the Surat split and asserted that the extremists fought at Surat against the oligarchic and arbitrary rule of the moderate leaders, whose insistence on their self-veneration, their obstinacy, reactionary conservatism and parochial policy, stifled the national movement. He further blamed the moderates for having framed the rigid constitution which prevented the admission of popular leaders to the Congress and rendered it an undemocratic body. Apprehending the possibility of his deportation, he published “An open letter to his Countrymen”, in which he expressed his last political will and testament to his countrymen.³⁹ In it he reiterated his definition of Swaraj as “absolute autonomy free from foreign control”, to be achieved by passive resistance through the formation of an Indian government in control over internal affairs, with the important new qualification of “so far as that could be done without disobeying the law or questioning the legal authority of the bureaucratic administration.”⁴⁰ Possibly as a result of a reaction to the acts of murder committed by the terrorists, or possibly due to his deep religious meditations in jail during his trial between May 1908 to May 1909, or possibly writing his open letter with an eye on the C.I.D., Aurobindo Ghosh strongly condemned the terrorists and stressed that the struggle of Indians for their rights must con-

³⁶ W. C. Blunt, *My Diaries*, London 1919, Vol. II, p. 229.

³⁷ “On the Present Situation”, speech at Poona on 19 January 1908, I.O.L. Tract 1044.

³⁸ Aurobindo Ghosh, *Ideals face to face*, May 1908, I.O.L. Tract 1044.

³⁹ Aurobindo Ghosh, *An open letter to his Countrymen*, Calcutta, August 1909, I.O.L. Tract 1050.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

form with no hatred to the Government established by law.⁴¹ He further moderated his earlier advocacy of revolution by explaining that the extremists were not committed to persistent refusal of co-operation with the Government unless and until they got Swaraj, but that they were ready to compromise and co-operate on the basis of progressive steps towards Swaraj.⁴²

Bipin Chandra Pal also modified his previous uncompromising assertions, by explaining that passive resistance did not deny the British Government of India its right to rule, but only sought to safeguard the right of the individual against the excessive exercise of administrative authority.⁴³ He added that the Nationalist leaders "have always recognized the futility of political assassination as an instrument for the attainment of political freedom."⁴⁴

Evidently, the repressive measures of the Government, especially the deterrents produced by the deportations of the Bengali leaders, the imprisonment of Tilak, and their own experience in jail, led Aurobindo Ghosh and Bipin Chandra Pal to retract their extreme views and refrain from political agitation.⁴⁵

For the same reasons and because of the frustrating realization that the militant movement in the Punjab had been enervated, Lajpat Rai also avoided political activity,⁴⁶ and concentrated during 1908 to 1914 on three issues: famine relief, the elevation of Untouchables, and the Hindu-Muslim conflict. On his return to

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 1. ⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁴³ "Swaraj", *Indian Review*, April 1909, p. 294. ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Bipin Chandra Pal left India for England in 1909. He returned to India in 1911, was arrested on a charge of sedition for having written an article entitled "The Ethology of the Bomb in Bengal", pleaded for mercy, and was sentenced to one month imprisonment. (Judicial and Public papers 4004/2884, 11 October 1911). He resumed political activity in 1916 when the extremists captured control over the Congress. Aurobindo Ghosh left India in 1910 and settled in Pondicherry where he remained until he died in 1950. In May 1962 Nehru wrote: "When Gandhiji started his non-co-operation movements and convulsed India, we expected Sri Aurobindo to emerge from his retirement and join the great struggle. We were disappointed at his not doing so." Foreword to Karan Singh, *Prophet of Indian Nationalism*, London 1963.

⁴⁶ Following Lajpat Rai's release from Mandalay, Morley wrote to Minto: "If Lajpat opens fire again we shall certainly support you to the uttermost in again putting his fire out by a douche of deportation." 5 November 1907. Mary, Countess of Minto, *India: Minto and Morley*, p. 163.

Lahore from Mandalay in November 1907, he organized famine relief work independent of Government support. Visiting famine stricken villages in the Punjab, he supervised the setting up of local centres from which volunteers (mainly members of the Arya Samaj) distributed money, food, and clothes.⁴⁷ His appeal for funds was met by contributions from merchants in Bombay, Delhi, Allahabad, Lahore and various other towns, as well as from Indian merchants in Rangoon, Singapore, Zanzibar and Nairobi.⁴⁸ Reviewing the success of the operation, Lajpat Rai stressed the valuable training it provided in self-help, particularly as a lesson in breaking away from dependence on the Government.⁴⁹ In the Swadeshi Conference held in December 1907 at Surat, he developed this theme as follows: "The highest dictates of patriotism require that we should help the destitute and the wretched. By sharing what has been given to us with our countrymen in distress, we should conclusively establish our claims to speak for them and to demand their co-operation with us in the ensuing struggle. Our claim to their regard should be based upon substantial services and not merely on lip-sympathy expressed in paper resolutions."⁵⁰

At the same time, he condemned the hankering of Westernized Indians after western materialism,⁵¹ and asserted that the exchange of India's heritage, particularly the harmonious structure of the family, for the "noisy and pushfull manners of the West" would result not in the acceleration of India's progress but in retrogression.⁵² Reviewing J. N. Farquhar's article "Is Christianity destined to become the religion of India", Lajpat Rai answered in the negative and bitterly denounced "the accursed industrial

⁴⁷ Lajpat Rai, *Report of People's Famine Relief Movement of 1908*, Lahore 1909, I.O.L. Tract 1098.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, the total amount of contributions reached Rs. 44,842.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁵⁰ Lajpat Rai's speech at the Swadeshi Conference held at Surat in 1907, I.O.L. Tract 1042, p. 123.

⁵¹ The assumption that in pre-British India materialism was totally shunned, is inaccurate, since both in Hinduism and Buddhism there are references to one's duty to strive for material success. The Jains and the Marwaris needed no Western impetus for their enterprise in business. Lajpat Rai's denunciation was against the adoption of western capitalism.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 121.

methods of the West which necessitate the accumulation of so many human souls under one roof in a vitiated atmosphere and then necessitate the enactment of factory laws.”⁵³

In his article “The Social Genius of Hinduism”,⁵⁴ he asserted that the solution to India’s social inequality lay neither in the wholesale imitation of the West nor in the Arya Samajist attempt to bring about the wholesale revival of India’s past. He argued that originally the division of the four classes in the Hindu social structure enabled each class to sustain and supplement the other by performing its own separate functions in the framework of mutual interdependence and as parts of the same social organism. In other words, the Brahmans were to teach *all*, the Kṣatriyas were to protect *all*, the Vaiśyas to produce and trade for *all*, and Sūdras to labour for *all*, while preserving the oneness of the whole of society. Yet, he went on, the system degenerated because of the selfish interests of the Brahmans who instilled invidious social distinctions. Hence he asserted that it was preferable to remove the abuses created by the Brahmans rather than seek inspiration from the model of western society. Deploring the existence of the Untouchables, he emphasized that it was useless to hope for any Hindu national solidarity as long as there were Untouchables, and urged the immediate need to remove at least the sting out of their name.⁵⁵ He contended that the boasted claim of Hinduism for its tolerance became nullified when Indians lacked tolerance of the Untouchables; that the agitation for political rights was trivial in comparison to the apathy towards the monstrosity of untouchability, and charged: “You dare not be uncivil or unkind to Mahomedans or Christians, but you are insolent towards your own people whom you think you can defy without any fear of retaliation.”⁵⁶ He warned that Christianity promised the Untouchables the release from their subjection to the most relentless form of social tyranny and that the Untouchables were turning their backs upon their Hindu oppressors by embracing Christianity. In 1912 Lajpat Rai visited shacks of Domes (one of the lowest Untouchable castes in the United Provinces) together with

⁵³ “Christianity and Hinduism”, *Indian World*, June 1908, p. 491.

⁵⁴ *Hindustan Review*, April 1909, p. 311.

⁵⁵ “The Depressed Classes”, *Indian Review*, May 1909, p. 400.

⁵⁶ “The Depressed Classes”, *Modern Review*, July 1909, p. 4.

high-caste Arya Samajist friends, ate their food and drank their water, and admitted them to the Arya Samaj.⁵⁷ Presiding over the Depressed Classes Conference held at Hardwar in March 1913, Lajpat Rai said: "We are today being pressed down by the dead-weight of the ignored depressed classes; we must float or sink with them. In their strength is our strength and in their weakness our fall."⁵⁸ He urged the abolition of untouchability by advocating the investiture of the sacred thread upon the Untouchables. Protesting against their oppression he continued: "No greater wrong can be done to a human being . . . than to put him in circumstances by the force of which he may come to believe that he is eternally doomed to a life of ignorance, of servitude and misery, and that any ambition for his improvement is a sin I am a Hindu and a firm believer in the doctrine of Karma, I also believe that every man makes his own Karma and is thus the arbiter of his own destiny."⁵⁹

In addition to his attack on Indians' treatment of the Untouchables, he complained that since in India people and state (Indians and the British Government of India) were not one and the same, the Government did not recognize the responsibility of the state to provide the people with free elementary education, housing for the poor, old age pensions, and wider diffusion of wealth.⁶⁰ Thus, while Lajpat Rai condemned western materialism, he sought the benefits of the European welfare state. In fact, he endeavoured to combine the principles of the Arya Samaj with western ideals of socialism, and believed that it was possible to benefit from western technological experience and yet remain immune to its moral shortcomings.

When the Indian Councils Act of 1909 established separate electorates for the Muslims, Lajpat Rai blamed the Congress for having failed throughout its existence to protect the interests of the Hindus.⁶¹ The Muslims were a minority in India but formed the majority in the Punjab, hence he believed that the Hindus

⁵⁷ Lajpat Rai's speech "On the upliftment of the Depressed Classes", Lahore 1914, I.O.L. Tract 1110, p. 27.

⁵⁸ Presidential speech of Lajpat Rai in the Depressed Classes Conference, Lahore 1913, I.O.L. Tract 1110, p. 8.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁶⁰ "Social Efficiency", *Indian Review*, October 1908, p. 691.

⁶¹ *Punjabee*, 29 June 1909.

were elbowed out by the Muslims, and he reiterated his contention that the Congress should be a Hindu movement in name and in fact. In 1906 Lajpat Rai wrote: "It is my firm conviction that Hindus shall never cease to be Hindus, and Mahomedans shall never cease to be Mahomedans. Their religious ideals are so different that it is impossible to expect a complete union. But they could make common cause in politics since they have common grievances against non-Indians."⁶² Yet in December 1909, he observed in the Punjab Hindu Conference, that the attempt of the Congress to bring about unity between Hindus and Muslims failed, and that it was essential for Hindus to close their own ranks first and cease to raise "the parrot cry of Indian unity".⁶³ He declared, "In the present struggle between Indian communities I shall be a Hindu first and an Indian afterwards."⁶⁴ Nevertheless, he emphasized that the "political salvation of India must come out of a combination and union of all communities into one national whole."⁶⁵ In 1911 when hostile feelings between the Arya Samaj and Muslims were intensified, he established the Hindu Elementary Education League whose aim was to promote the study and use of Hindi. He revived the Urdu-Hindi controversy and urged Punjabis to boycott Urdu literature.⁶⁶

In April 1914 Lajpat Rai went to England with the intention of staying there some months, but his return to India was forbidden until February 1920.

Banerjea went to England in May 1909 as the representative of the Indian Press to the Imperial Press Conference. He thanked Lord Morley, who presided over a session of the Conference, for the 1909 reforms, and expressed his belief that they were bound to give Indians "a definite, effective and real measure of self-government",⁶⁷ but again qualified Indian self-government in terms of "the cement of the Empire" and added, "it is not inconsistent with the paramountcy of British rule in India."⁶⁸ After the close of

⁶² *Ibid.*, 13 October 1906, in Home Prog. 7590, July 1907.

⁶³ *Indian Review*, December 1909, p. 932.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ P.N.N.R. *Zamindar* (Lahore) 24 August 1911.

⁶⁷ Surendranath Banerjea, *The Trumpet Voice of India, Speeches Delivered in England in 1909*. Madras 1917, p. 15.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 30.

the conference Banerjea delivered speeches in several places,⁶⁹ in which he urged the modification of the partition of Bengal and pleaded for Indian control over the Indian budget. On 1 July 1909 Sir William Curzon-Wyllie, Political Secretary at the India Office, was assassinated in London. Banerjea promptly expressed in public meetings and in the Press his sense of detestation, and continued the theme of partitioned Bengal, but the murder of Sir William Curzon-Wyllie put Englishmen in no mood to hear about Indian grievances. Banerjea attributed his failure to persuade Morley to release the Bengali deportees to the setback caused by the murder.⁷⁰ Morley however, described the interview to Minto as follows: "B. nearly made me cascade with his compliments—their Guru, a Great Man, then (by noble crescendo) the Greatest Man since Akbar! ! ! I hope he'll balance the little account between us two, by swearing that you are far Greater than Aurungzebe."⁷¹ In his last public speech at Caxton Hall before his return to India, Banerjea regretted the apathy of the British public towards India and appealed for Englishmen's support by reiterating his contention that the electors of Great Britain were the real rulers of India.⁷² On his return to India, Banerjea revived the idea of holding a session of the Congress in London and opined that it would create a profound impression in England.⁷³ In England, Lord Curzon, however, saw it quite differently. He said: "If you have an Empire you must have Imperialism, Imperialism being the essence or spirit of Empire . . . were India to be lost, she herself would reel back into chaos, and the British Empire, at any rate in Asia, would perish."⁷⁴ He emphasized that India was the only

⁶⁹ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, pp. 268-282.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

⁷¹ Morley's *Recollections*, Vol. II, Book V, p. 313. Significantly, Gokhale expressed his low estimate of Banerjea thus: "Surendranath is an orator, but without energy and backbone, and cannot keep in hand the unruly pack whom he professes to lead." Minto Papers, No. 59, 1909, in C. H. Philips, *The Evolution of India and Pakistan*, Vol. IV, Oxford University Press 1962.

⁷² *Speeches and Writings of the Hon. Surendranath Banerjea*, ed. G. A. Natesan, Madras 1918, p. 360.

⁷³ "A Session of the Congress in London", *Indian Review*, October 1909, pp. 721-722.

⁷⁴ Lord Curzon's speech on "The True Imperialism", *The Nineteenth Century and After*, January-June 1908, p. 158.

part of the British Empire which was an Empire and that but for India and the maintenance of her security, Britain would not have extended her rule to Egypt, Aden, or the Cape, Mauritius, Ceylon and Burma.⁷⁵ He frankly acknowledged that the abundant population of India supplied the vital labour force for the plantations of Trinidad and Jamaica and for the mines of South Africa, while the Indian army fought British battles and safeguarded the British Empire in Asia.⁷⁶ Hence, he concluded in emphasizing that British rule in India "must for as long as we can see remain in British hands."⁷⁷

Yet for Banerjea the place of India in the Empire was primarily that of mutual co-operation which was destined to grow into equal brotherhood. His experience in the Imperial Press Conference in which he deliberated with representatives from England, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Burma and Ceylon, on subjects of Imperial unity and Imperial defence, strengthened his belief in the brotherly membership of the Empire. He was entertained at lunches and dinners where "the talk was frank, cordial and free from reserve and restraint."⁷⁸ He was introduced to prominent people; was greatly impressed by luncheon entertainment given by the Earl and Countess of Warwick at their castle;⁷⁹ he visited, among other places, the Foreign Office and Windsor Castle; and gratifyingly noted the compliments he received for his speeches.⁸⁰ In short, he felt as an equal member of the British Empire, and was convinced that India too was to become an equal partner in the Empire.⁸¹

In November 1910 Lord Hardinge succeeded Lord Minto as Viceroy, while Lord Crewe was appointed Secretary of State for India in succession to Lord Morley. On 12 December 1911, at the Delhi Durbar of King George V and Queen Mary, the King announced the modification of the partition of Bengal, by which

⁷⁵ Lord Curzon, "The Place of India in the Empire", Address delivered on 19 October 1909 before the Philosophical Institute of Edinburgh, I.O.L. Tract 1048, p. 10.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁷⁸ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 261.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 262-263.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 266.

the two areas of Bengal were reunited, while Calcutta was replaced by Delhi as the new capital. At the same time, the Government of India published its Dispatch to the Secretary of State in which it pointed out that "in the course of time, the just demands of Indians for a larger share in the Government of the country will have to be satisfied, and the question will be how this devolution of power can be conceded without impairing the supreme authority of the Governor General in Council", and suggested, "gradually to give the Provinces a larger measure of self-government until at last India would consist of a number of administrations, autonomous in all provincial affairs, with the Government of India above them all."

The Delhi Durbar, the unification of Bengal, and the Dispatch, greatly pleased the moderates. Banerjea claimed that the modification of the partition of Bengal was the triumph of constitutional agitation.⁸² Notwithstanding Lord Crewe's emphatic assertion in June 1912, that the Dispatch could by no means be construed as a declaration for Dominion Self-Government for India, Banerjea interpreted the Dispatch as follows: "To us these words will be like the column of smoke and the pillar of fire illuminating our path in that grand march to the promised land where awaits the blessing of Self-Government."⁸³

In January 1913, Banerjea successfully stood for election to the Bengal Legislative Council and to the Imperial Legislative Council. Although under the 1909 Regulations a dismissed Indian Civil Servant was not eligible for election, Banerjea's disqualification for membership in the Bengal Legislative Council had been removed in 1910 by Sir Edward Baker, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, and in February 1913, Lord Hardinge approved Banerjea's election to the Imperial Legislative Council.⁸⁴

The *Nayak* thus commented on Banerjea's election: "Surendranath has now again got an opportunity to sit in the Bengal Legislative Council as leader of the unofficial Members. Again will the Council Chamber echo to the sound of his voice, his oratory will sweep torrents, again there will be profuse shedding of crocodile tears at the sorrow of the country and the people. We are remind-

⁸² *Report of the twenty-sixth I.N.C. Calcutta 1911*, p. 39.

⁸³ *Report of the twenty-seventh I.N.C. Bankipur 1912*, p. 90.

⁸⁴ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, pp. 292-293.

ed at this moment of the old days, of boycott, of Surendranath's resignation from his Honorary Magistrateship; of the efforts to associate boycott with religion; of the ardour with which the Swadeshi vow was administered; of the sonorous speeches made on the banks of the river at Kalighat. We are reminded how Surendranath found out that he bore the sacred Brahmanical thread, how he exhibited it in public and made an open exhibition of his Brahmanicism. One by one all these things come back to our recollections; how many images of thee, how many different guises are pictured on the mirror of our mind now... Oh, thou of many guises, of diverse speech who has played many parts, and art the foremost of the Babu community of Bengal, just ponder on thy many guises in the mirror of the past, and just explain to us who thou art and what is thy guise? For twenty years we have been thy follower, but without so far knowing thee for what thou really art... You are now an Hon'ble Member of Council, going to be courted and honoured like a Prince or a Minister of State. You have put on the mark of loyalty on your forehead and are paying frequent visits to Government House. But do you ever for an instant now think of those whom you stirred up into enthusiasm and fury, whom you brought to ruin in a body? Do they—the men who acted as your humble agents, who went to jail having taken part in picketing, who gave up the University which they called 'a slave house', who went on strike and gave up service under Government—do they ever now rise before your mind?... Can you give up the ideal which you have held up before the people, to their ruin? As our senior in age you are worthy of all respects, but know that you cannot retain your old influence over Bengalis. People have come to know you for what you really are ⁸⁵... When the policy of 'rallying the Moderates' was taken up by Lord Minto, the full measure of these men (Banerjea and Ambica Charan Muzumdar) was revealed. All these have opened the eyes of their countrymen. Whatever value Government may put on their pretensions their compatriots have long ago found out that they are mere asses in lion's skin."⁸⁶

⁸⁵ B.N.N.R. *Nayak*, 10 January 1913 (Written by the editor Birendra Chandra Ghosh).

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 14 January 1913. See also the *Dainik Chandrika* of 3 January 1915.

Banerjea remained in the Imperial Legislative Council from 1913 to 1916, when he lost his seat to Bhupendranath Basu. During 1913 to 1914, he moved resolutions which recommended the separation of judicial and executive functions in the administration of criminal justice;⁸⁷ the modification of the 1910 Press Act, whose provision for high security payments from offending newspapers led to their extinction;⁸⁸ and the extension of local self-government to allow Municipal Councils to elect their Chairman, to exercise independent control over their budgets, and to form village panchayats with power to manage sanitation and schools.⁸⁹

The resolutions were defeated by the official majority in the Council.

It was this feeling of frustration—of having the ability to move resolutions only to realize they were of no avail—which rendered the 1909 reforms a disappointment to Congressmen.

Yet the main grievance which sustained the otherwise emasculated Congress was the racial discrimination against Indians in South Africa. In 1911, when Gandhi reported to the twenty-sixth session of the Congress on the discrimination against Indians in South Africa,⁹⁰ and in 1912, when Gokhale returned from South Africa and described⁹¹ Gandhi's Satyagraha, the protest resolutions of the Congress against the abusive treatment of Indians in South Africa were *the* resolutions which sparked life into the otherwise dormant proceedings of the Congress. In November 1913, Lord Hardinge too expressed the deep and burning sympathy of Indians for the passive resistance of their compatriots in South Africa.⁹² The keynote of the 1913 Karachi Congress was the South African question. In addition to Congressmen's natural sympathy for Indians in South Africa, the main reason for their protests was the realization that Indians lacked equal citizenship both in South Africa and in India. "Indian Nationalism grew to its strength in Africa."⁹³

⁸⁷ *Speeches and Writings of Hon. Surendranath Banerjea*, ed. G. A. Natesan, Madras 1918, pp. 204-210.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 162-174.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 175-185.

⁹⁰ *Report of the twenty-sixth I.N.C. Calcutta 1911*, pp. 107-110.

⁹¹ *Report of the twenty-seventh I.N.C. Bankipur 1912*, p. 58.

⁹² Lord Hardinge, *My Indian Years*, London 1948, p. 91.

⁹³ Edward Thompson, *The Reconstruction of India*, London, 1930. p. 78.

In May 1914, Gandhi and Lajpat Rai were the proposed candidates for the presidency of the twenty-ninth session of the Congress to be held in Madras.⁹⁴ Gandhi returned to India in December 1914 but was to refrain from political activity for a year.

Lajpat Rai declined the invitation to preside over the Madras Congress and explained in his letter from England⁹⁵ that contrary to the belief of Congressmen in Madras, he had not reconciled his political opinions with those of the Congress. He added, that since the Congress was affected by fear of the Government and fear lest it would offend the Muslim members, its language was that of humility and helplessness, and since his intention was to denounce the leaders of the Congress who obtained membership in the Councils, it was inexpedient for him to preside over the Congress, while the prospect of discussing ordinary platitudes in a presidential speech merely to gain honour, did not appeal to him.

Although the Madras Reception Committee initially recommended Lajpat Rai for the presidency, on second voting, Dinshaw Wacha, Subramanya Iyer, G. A. Natesan, Nawab Syed Mohamed and Fazul Haque succeeded in exerting pressure on the committee to disown Lajpat Rai. Justifying this action, Subramanya Iyer explained that since Lajpat Rai was *persona non grata* with the Government and with the Muslims, his election to the presidency was inopportune.⁹⁶ In fact, Muslim members of the Congress warned that they would not attend the session if Lajpat Rai presided.⁹⁷ Thus, Lajpat Rai's nomination was turned down and Bhupendranath Basu was elected instead. Furthermore, Annie Besant's proposal in the Subjects Committee of the 1914 Congress to change Articles I and II of the constitution in order to admit the extremists back to the Congress was rebuffed by Pherozeshah Mehta.⁹⁸

The 1914 Congress pledged its whole-hearted support to England in the war. Lord Pentland, Governor of Madras, attended the Congress when the resolution of unswerving allegiance to England was passed. Supporting the resolution, Banerjea emphasiz-

⁹⁴ *The Hindu* of Madras, 14 May 1914.

⁹⁵ "Congress Politics in 1914", *The People*, 14 November 1929.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ P.N.N.R. *Jhang Sial* (Lahore), 28 October 1914.

⁹⁸ B.N.N.R. *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 31 December 1914.

ed that the Congress would not trade in its loyalty to England.⁹⁹

During 1914-1915, Banerjea addressed over thirty public meetings in which he advocated recruitment for the defence of the Empire.¹⁰⁰

In contrast, Lajpat Rai asserted that Indians should not support England in the war as mercenaries.¹⁰¹ In the introduction to his autobiography, written in November 1914 in New York, he praised terrorists in India for their "valour and patriotic sacrifice". In particular, he extolled the vengeance of Narendra Gossain (the approver in the Alipur conspiracy case who was murdered in jail by two revolutionists who were later executed)¹⁰² in terms of "a day will come when people will take wreaths of homage to their statues."¹⁰³ Furthermore, he wrote: "The bomb thrower on Lord Hardinge did a memorable act unique for its valour."¹⁰⁴ He regretted that the secret societies lacked the support of wealthy people and that their revolutionary acts were regarded by the masses as sheer madness. Asserting that the revolutionists "spread the gospel of freedom", he deplored the fact that educated Indians regarded their efforts as futile and detrimental to India, charged them with selfishness and cowardice, and concluded, "they [educated Indians] desire liberty but they are not prepared to make any sacrifices for it. If the British declared they would quit India in a week's time, 90 per cent of them would send petitions begging of them not to be forsaken . . . they were brought up in comfort and fear the hardships entailed in political unrest and revolution . . . they profess desire for 'liberty' but they prefer to continue to enjoy their comfort though it means continuance to wear the badge of slavery. They are slaves to lucre, status and comfort. . . . Those who blame the extremists party for 'having injured the cause' by prompting Government repression, do not realize that under foreign rule, peace unalloyed by repression would be fatal. The political consciousness created by the extremists in a decade could not have been created by the moderates in half a

⁹⁹ *Report of the twenty-ninth I.N.C. Madras 1914*, p. 99.

¹⁰⁰ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 300.

¹⁰¹ "Congress Politics in 1914", *The People*, 14 November 1929.

¹⁰² Rowlatt Report, p. 22.

¹⁰³ Lajpat Rai, *Autobiography*.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

century. For a subject nation, nothing is more fatal than peace. . . liberty cannot be won without sacrifice."¹⁰⁵

Yet, it would be wrong to infer from Lajpat Rai's praise for the terrorists that he approved of their aim to oust the British outright from India. In August 1907, Minto had written to Morley that Lajpat Rai was connected in a revolutionary plot with the Amir of Afghanistan,¹⁰⁶ but no proof of this charge was ever furnished. The *Englishman* published the allegation on 10 September 1908, and in a suit against the *Englishman*, the Calcutta High Court awarded Lajpat Rai Rs. 15,000 damages for libel.¹⁰⁷ In November 1914, Lajpat Rai was invited by two members of the Ghadr party—Chandra Chakravarti and Heramba Lal Gupta—to a meeting of Indian students of their Hindustani Association in New York, in which Chakravarti gave an anti-British and pro-German speech. When pressed to speak, Lajpat Rai said: "I am an Indian patriot and I wish freedom for my country. I have no sympathy with the Germans nor have anything against them. Considering our present circumstances we will rather stay in the British Empire as a self-governing part than go out to be governed by another nation."¹⁰⁸ At another meeting of Ghadr members, Lajpat Rai was told by one Barkatullah that a rebellion was imminent in India, that it will be backed by the Amir of Kabul, and that Lajpat Rai should co-operate without fear, since India would be free in three months time. To this he answered that he wished neither the Amir nor the Germans in India, and called Barkatullah a fool and a liar.¹⁰⁹

In December 1914, Lajpat Rai was approached by Heramba Lal Gupta in Boston, and was informed by him that the Germans were eager to have his support on any terms of agreement, and asked whether he would co-operate. To which he answered

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ Mary, Countess of Minto, *India: Minto and Morley*, p. 251.

¹⁰⁷ *Indian Review*, July 1909, p. 555.

¹⁰⁸ Lajpat Rai, *Recollections of his life and work for independent India while living in the United States and Japan*. ed. V. C. Joshi, *Lajpat Rai Autobiographical writings*. (For the background of Chandra Chakravarti and Heramba Lal Gupta and their revolutionary conspiracies with German agents, see *Rowlatt Report*, pp. 52-53).

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

"No!".¹¹⁰ At Los Angeles, Heramba Lal Gupta again pressed Lajpat Rai, and on German instructions offered him the leadership of the Indo-German organization. It was again flatly refused. In December 1915, Lajpat Rai attended a meeting of Indian students in New York, in which his few words of greetings were interpreted by the Chairman, Ram Chandra Mazumdar, as an indication of his sympathy with the Ghadr movement. Yet this was strongly repudiated by Lajpat Rai, who protested against his having been tricked and misrepresented by Ram Chandra Mazumdar.¹¹¹ In 1916, Chandra Chakravarti was appointed head of the Ghadr party in America, and on his return from Germany was instructed to persuade Lajpat Rai to go to Germany, but again the offer was rejected.

In assessing the revolutionists in America, Lajpat Rai disparaged their idea of liberating India by means of German help, and expressed his conviction that in the very remote chance of its success, German rule would prove far worse than British rule. He concluded in observing that the Ghadr leaders brought nothing but discredit to their cause both in America and Germany, that they embezzled their funds, and opined that they would have been the worst possible rulers had India fallen into their hands.

Notwithstanding the unsuccessful attempt to enlist Lajpat Rai to the Ghadr party, the Indian Nationalist Committee at Leipzig published in 1917 his article entitled "Reflections on the political situation in India"¹¹² with the following introduction: "Insulted and disillusioned India will realize frustration after the war and will tread upon the red path of revolution to complete the work begun by the patriots who waged the first war of Independence in 1857. Lajpat Rai's 'Reflections' is a warning and assertion that nothing short of organized armed force will free the helpless millions of India from the murderous tentacles of the British octopus." In the article, Lajpat Rai described British rule as tyrannical and oppressive, noted that neither the moderates nor the extremists desired the immediate severance of India from British rule,

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *Ibid.* (for Ram Chandra Mazumdar's part in Ghadr, see *Rowlatt Report*, pp. 52-53).

¹¹² Lajpat Rai's article was written in Lahore in 1914 before his departure to England and America.

and continued, "the spread of revolutionary ideas and the development of the movement for independence will not be stopped. . . ."¹¹³ Repression only intensifies the discontent . . .¹¹⁴ India has entered on a new phase, her sons have begun to feel that it is worth while to die in the cause of freedom. . . . They die in order to show their countrymen the path to liberation."¹¹⁵ On the other hand, he belittled the hopes of the moderates to gain administrative concessions after the war, and added that if they were to be granted, they will be given in a spirit of a master who rewards his servant or slave for his good behaviour.¹¹⁶

In India, the enthusiastic expression of the 1914 Congress of support for England in the war, was dimmed by the end of 1916. The war and its many-sided effects completely transformed the attitude of Indians towards British rule and towards the hitherto acknowledged superiority of the West.¹¹⁷ The change coincided with the death in 1915 of the three most prominent leaders of the moderates: Pherozeshah Mehta, Gokhale and Subramanya Iyer. The 1915 Congress was still dominated by the moderates, yet, bereft of Pherozeshah Mehta and Gokhale, it could no longer keep out the extremists who entered the Congress in 1915 and swelled its ranks.¹¹⁸

In the presidential address of the 1915 Congress, Satyendra Sinha urged "a frank and full statement of the policy of the Government as regards the future of India",¹¹⁹ in order to satisfy the new generation of young Indians. He stressed that the goal of Indian self-government should be attained in gradual stages and that Indian patriotism could be reconciled with India's partnership in the British Empire. Looking back, the presidential address

¹¹³ Lajpat Rai, *Reflections on the political situation in India*, Lahore 1914, ed. and published by the Indian Nationalist Committee, Leipzig 1917, p. 4.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹¹⁷ See Percival Spear, *India*, University of Michigan Press 1961, Chapter XXXI, pp. 337-346.

¹¹⁸ In comparison with the small number of moderate delegates to the Congress during 1908 to 1914, the number in 1915 was 2,259.

¹¹⁹ *Report of the thirtieth I.N.C. Bombay 1915*, p. 23.

of Sinha was "the swan song of the old moderate leaders".¹²⁰

At the 1915 Congress, Annie Besant tried to enlist the support of the Congress to form a Home Rule League. Her attempt failed because of the opposition of Banerjea who argued that the formation of a Home Rule League would overlap and weaken the Congress.¹²¹ After the death of Pherozeshah Mehta, Gokhale and Subramanya Iyer, Banerjea became the most important leader of the moderates. But his opposition to the Home Rule League marked the last successful move of the moderates to check the ascendancy of radicalism in the Congress. In September 1916, Annie Besant formally established her Home Rule League. Banerjea's refusal to join it marked the beginning of a sharp decline in his popularity. Yet, as he explained, "I had helped to build up the Congress. It was a part of my life work, my pride and my privilege, and it was not in me to do aught which, in my opinion, would weaken its influence."¹²²

At the 1916 Lucknow Congress, the extremists headed by Tilak, Gandhi, Annie Besant and Bipin Chandra Pal, wrested the control of the Congress from the moderates. "The Congress", Tilak declared, "had done its work as a deliberative body."¹²³ He called for action and voiced the demand of the Congress for Home Rule, i.e. India to be a self-governing Dominion in which Indians would have control over the Central Legislative Council with the exception of military matters and foreign affairs, and complete Indian control over all matters in the provincial governments. Both the Congress and the Muslim League pressed jointly for these demands.

Until 1915 the moderates' Congress voiced national aspirations but it was an exclusive body whose watchword was caution. From 1916, the Congress was still composed of lawyers, journalists, teachers and merchants, yet, under the control of the extremists it became the national forum and constituted the vanguard of militant nationalism. The change was expressed by Lajpat Rai thus, "India of 1917 is different from India of 1907. In 1907 we

¹²⁰ T. Walter Wallbank, *India in the New Era*, University of Southern California 1951, p. 100.

¹²¹ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 237.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 238.

¹²³ *Report of the thirty-first I.N.C. Lucknow 1916*, p. 85.

were fighting for crumbs. In 1917 we no longer pray for concessions but are demanding rights."¹²⁴

During the first six months of 1917, Annie Besant stirred an all-India campaign for Home Rule. Her arrest in June 1917 aroused widespread protests which intensified the agitation for Home Rule.

In view of this forceful agitation and in view of the change produced by the war, the Government could no longer depreciate the Indian demands. The Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, had posed the ever argued questions "What is the goal of British rule in India and what are the steps on the road to that goal?", and after much debate, the Secretary of State for India, Edwin Montagu, declared on 20 August 1917 in the House of Commons: "The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire." For the first time, British policy concretely envisaged national parliamentary government in an Indian Dominion.¹²⁵ Yet the declaration added the qualification that the realization of this goal will be achieved by successive stages whose time and measure will be determined by the British Government and the Government of India.

The 1917 Calcutta Congress met under the glow of the August declaration. It was presided over by Annie Besant, whose election to the presidency was a successful challenge to Banerjea's leadership in Bengal.¹²⁶ The session clearly marked the undisputed control of the extremists over the Congress under the leadership of Lokamanya Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi and C. R. Das.

When the Montagu-Chelmsford Report was published on 8 July 1918, Annie Besant denounced its provisions for the gradual transfer of power as "unworthy to be offered by England or to

¹²⁴ Lajpat Rai, *An Open Letter to the Right Honourable Edwin Samuel Montague*, New York, 1917, p. 12.

¹²⁵ Reginald Coupland, *India: A Re-Statement*, p. 111.

¹²⁶ Hamendranath Das Gupta, *Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das*, Delhi 1960, p. 35.

be accepted by India.”¹²⁷ In the special conference of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, held on 11 July 1918, Banerjea advocated the acceptance of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, while C. R. Das led the majority decision of the conference to reject the proposed reforms. Henceforth, Banerjea’s partial command in Bengal over national decisions was taken over by C. R. Das.¹²⁸ A special session of the Congress was called in August 1918 at Bombay to criticize the inadequacy of the proposed reforms. Banerjea had asked the postponement of the session in an attempt to avert a schism between the moderates and the extremists, but his request was refused.¹²⁹ From Surat 1907 to Bombay 1918, the tables had been turned upon him. He left the Congress and headed the separate All-India Moderates’ Conference which convened on 1 November 1918.

Describing his feelings on leaving the Congress, Banerjea wrote: “We had contributed to build up the great National Institution with our life-blood. We had raised it up from infancy to adolescence, from adolescence to maturity, and now, in full view of the crowning reward of our lifelong labours, we found the sacred temple of national unity swayed by divided counsels, resounding with the voice of conflict and controversy, and divorced from the healing accents of moderation and prudence. We could not but secede; for the difference between those who captured the machinery of the Congress and ourselves was fundamental.”¹³⁰

In his presidential address to the All-India Moderates’ Conference, Banerjea defined the Moderate party as “the friends of reform and the enemies of revolution.”¹³¹ He called upon moderates “to grasp the Government hand of fellowship” with enthusiasm, and to recognize the August declaration as the epitome of Britain’s mission in India. He asserted that the declaration constituted the fulfilment of the aspirations of Dadabhai Naoroji, W. C. Bonnerji, Pherozeshah Mehta and Gokhale, and stressed (in what must have been an expression of his personal feelings) that the

¹²⁷ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 305.

¹²⁸ Hamendranath Das Gupta, *Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das*, p. 36.

¹²⁹ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 306.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 307.

¹³¹ Presidential address of the Hon. Surendranath Banerjea at the All-India Moderates’ Conference. Bombay November 1918, p. 1.

acceptance of the declaration was a unique chance to realize one's hopes and efforts in one's lifetime. He explained the secession of the moderates from the Congress as an unavoidable development resulting from the fact that the moderates believed in a gradual advance based on fitness, and emphasized "there is no short-cut to constitutional developments in politics."¹³² He contended that the soundness of the moderates' position was unquestionable since it was supported by the British Committee of the Congress, and warned that unless the proposed reforms were accepted they might be lost altogether. Banerjea was still thinking in 1918 in terms of the cautious 1895 Congress, but though he did not visualize India as a complete independent state, he anticipated 1947 when he observed: "The Reform will mark the indissoluble union between England and India, by making India an equal partner in the great confederacy of the free states of the Empire."¹³³ Concluding his presidential address Banerjea urged the moderates' conference to send "the best men, representing the culture, the wealth, the public spirit of India, to plead before the bar of British public opinion to support the scheme."¹³⁴

Accordingly, in May 1919, Banerjea led the moderates' deputation to England to give evidence before the Joint Select Committee. Other members of the deputation included Srinivasa Shastri, C. Y. Chintamani and Tej Bahadur Sapru. In London, Annie Besant, who had veered to the moderates, was "a tower of strength to the deputation".¹³⁵ Tilak, who was also in London, gave evidence before the Joint Select Committee and was anxious to support the proposed reforms.¹³⁶ In fact by 1919, Tilak gave proof of the observation he had made in 1907 that "the Extremists of today will be Moderates of to-morrow, just as the Moderates of to-day were the Extremists of yesterday."¹³⁷ While the details of the proposed reforms were worked out in London, in India the recommendation of the Rowlatt Report to try seditious cases without juries or witnesses was enacted in January 1919. "The

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 322.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 321.

¹³⁷ Tilak's speech, "The Tenets of the New Party", Calcutta, 2 January 1907. I.O.L. Tract 1010.

Rowlatt Act was the parent of the Non-Co-operation movement."¹³⁸ Mahatma Gandhi's declaration of hartal, his arrest, the riots in the Punjab, the Amritsar massacre and above all, the vote of approval of repression by the House of Lords, resulted in Gandhi's insistence upon disassociation from the "Satanic" Government of India.

In February 1920 Lajpat Rai returned to India and was elected in September president of the special Calcutta Congress. During his stay in America, from 1916 Lajpat Rai actively propagated Home Rule for India. He argued that the splitting up of an independent India into a number of political units was still preferable to its remaining under emasculating British rule.¹³⁹ He argued (inaccurately) that while English political ideas negated the totalitarian philosophy of Heinrich von Treitschke, in India, British rule acted upon the doctrines of the Prussian professor since the interests of the people were overridden when they clashed with the interests of the state.¹⁴⁰ He pointed out that under Muslim rule, the Muslims had no Lancashire-like industries to protect, nor had there been an India Office in Arabia or Persia, while under British rule, India, for the first time in her history, was ruled from the outside by an alien race, with the result that "for the first time in the political history of India it has become a political disqualification to be an Indian."¹⁴¹ In 1919, he denounced the moderates for having justified their acceptance of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report by stressing the need for patience and sobriety, scorned their timid argument that excessive criticism of the proposed reforms might result in their complete retraction, and emphasized that the reforms were to be conceded not as a matter of favour but because the pressure of circumstances in India made it no longer possible to postpone them. Moreover, he asserted that even if the proposed reforms were to collapse, the outcome would be preferable since they would either be replaced by a more democratic scheme or by a policy of repression that will serve to invigorate the Indian movement for liberty.¹⁴² He condemned the moderates

¹³⁸ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 300.

¹³⁹ Lajpat Rai, *Young India, an interpretation and a history of the nationalist movement from within*, New York, 1916, pp. 17-41.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 75-78.

¹⁴² Lajpat Rai, *A Call to Young India*. India Home Rule League, New

for having traded in the name of patriotism and the masses and for having stigmatized the extremists as “youngsters”, “demagogues”, “firebrands” and for calling the mass agitation “mobocracy”,—the same epithet that the Anglo-Indians had previously applied to the moderates themselves.¹⁴³ He protested that though the moderates were in a minority, they desired to rule the majority even more autocratically than when they had been in a majority.¹⁴⁴ Referring to Banerjea, Lajpat Rai wrote: “A leader who puts his own past services and sacrifices in the forefront of his arguments, puts himself in an awkward and somewhat ridiculous position . . . Vain boasting of past sacrifices in the cause of the country!”¹⁴⁵ And again, “The greatest democratic leader of Bengal is always anxious to keep on the side of the big property holders. He is very happy when they call him the ‘Tribune of the People’. His clarion voice gives utterance to beautiful phrases . . . but when the time comes for lofty action he is always on the side of property, privilege and power . . . moderation is good so long as it does not become stale and sterile, excessive moderation is as dangerous to national development and national welfare as excessive extremism. Demagoguery is detestable, but for some, applause is the breath of life.”¹⁴⁶

While Banerjea could envisage only the limited goal of India as an equal partner in the Empire, Lajpat Rai looked realistically beyond independence, and asserted that complete independence for India would be disadvantageous as long as Indians lacked the determination to remove their own social and economic oppression.¹⁴⁷ Clarifying his contention, Lajpat Rai wrote: “We want to preach the gospel of social democracy. We know that we cannot fly the flag of socialism . . . [but] the present constitution of society is wrong and unjust. It is cruel and barbaric. We want equal opportunity and equal justice for all.”¹⁴⁸ He emphasized that it was essential to bring about an agrarian reform which would

York 1919, in *India's Will to Freedom*, a collection of Lajpat Rai writings. Madras 1921, pp. 20-22.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

provide each peasant with sufficient land to enable him to live a decent life, and added that unless this was accepted as the primary need for India, the question of the transfer of power to Indians remained immaterial, since it would only result in the substitution of one class of capitalist masters by another.¹⁴⁹ In his "Message to Punjabis" on 15 August 1919, he wrote: "We are neither fit nor ripe for a militant revolutionary struggle. We want a revolution but not force or violence . . . *organize the middle class, the peasants and the workers. Follow Gandhi!*"¹⁵⁰ While in his letter to Gandhi, he wrote: "We have to work *with them* [peasants and labourers] in a spirit of co-operation and not to work *for them* in a spirit of patronage."¹⁵¹ In Marxist terms he declared, "We believe that the ryots and the working men in India and elsewhere are being exploited and robbed by the classes in possession of the means of production and distribution."¹⁵² But he emphasized that he had no belief in the Marxist theory that a country must first pass through a capitalistic phase before the proletariat could exert itself, and stressed that Indians should not aim to adopt the European capitalist system based on industrialism.¹⁵³ Referring to the proposed Montagu-Chelmsford reforms he contended, "The Government of India is a government of capitalists and landlords of both England and India. Under the proposed scheme, the power of the former will be reduced and that of the latter increased. The ugly feature of the scheme is in the possibility of its giving too much power to the profiteering class, be they the landlords of Bengal and Oudh, or the millionaires of Bombay."¹⁵⁴ In the same vein he exclaimed, "What are we aiming at? Do we want to copy and emulate Europe even in its mistakes and blunders? Do we want to rise in order to fall? Does the road to heaven lie through hell? We shall not be a party to any scheme which shall add to the powers of the capitalists and the landlords, and will introduce and accentuate the

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 69, "The Greatest need of the Country", *Young India*, 13 November 1919.

¹⁵² Lajpat Rai, *The Political Future of India*, New York 1919, p. 53.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 201-202.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

evils of the industrial civilization . . .¹⁵⁵ We want to avoid the evils of the class struggle. The only way to meet Bolshevism is to concede to the peoples their rights. Otherwise the discontented and exploited countries will be the best breeding centres for it. India must come to its own soon or else not even the Himalayas can bar the entry of Bolshevism to India. A contented, self-governed India may be proof against it; a discontented, oppressed India would perhaps offer the most fertile field."¹⁵⁶

The remarkable new note in Lajpat Rai's writings during 1919-1920 was his advocacy of Hindu-Muslim unity. He urged Muslims and Hindus to take mutual pride in the achievements of Hindu and Muslim heroes and saints and wrote: "If Mother India had an Asoka she had an Akbar too, if she had a Chaitanya she had Kabir also. For every Hindu hero she can cite a Mahomedan hero. We may be as proud of Syed Ahmed Khan as of Ram Mohan Roy and Dayananda."¹⁵⁷ He modified his championship of Hindi and suggested Hindustani as the national language for India.¹⁵⁸

On his return to India, he pursued his new advocacy of Hindu-Muslim unity and stressed that it should not be adopted as a measure of political expediency.¹⁵⁹ He denounced the moderates' decision to work the 1919 reforms, as national treason, and asserted that the co-operation of conquered men in the administration of a conquered country was an admission of the right of the conquerors to rule over the conquered.¹⁶⁰ On the other hand, Banerjea claimed that the moderates saved the reforms "from being wrecked by wild extravagance"¹⁶¹ and called for constructive work instead of non-co-operation.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁵ Lajpat Rai, "The Problem of India", *Modern Review*, December 1919, p. 606.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

¹⁵⁷ Lajpat Rai, "The teaching of patriotism", *Modern Review*, June 1919, pp. 628-629.

¹⁵⁸ Lajpat Rai, "An All-India scheme and All-India language", *Modern Review*, October 1919, p. 383.

¹⁵⁹ Lajpat Rai speech "Towards Freedom" in Bombay in February 1920, in *India's Will to Freedom*, p. 84.

¹⁶⁰ Lajpat Rai, "Non-Co-operation", July 1920, *ibid.*, pp. 107-110.

¹⁶¹ *Report of the second All-India Conference of the Moderate Party*, Calcutta, 30 December 1919-1 January 1920, p. 11.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 44.

In an attempt to bring about reconciliation between the moderates and the extremists, Lajpat Rai invited the moderates to attend the special Calcutta Congress of September 1920. Banerjea turned down the invitation in the following letter to Lajpat Rai: "You are a convinced Non-co-operationist, most of the Provincial Congress Committees declared in favour of Non-Co-operation. Under the circumstances I feel that my presence at the Congress can serve no useful purpose since mine will be a voice crying in the wilderness."¹⁶³

The keynote of the special Calcutta Congress was Gandhi's resolution for complete Non-Co-operation, including the boycott of the Legislative Councils. Gandhi impressed upon the Congress that the reforms were "a dangerous trap which concealed gilded chains that enslaved the country",¹⁶⁴ and promised independence in one year provided complete Non-Co-operation was adopted. In the presidential speech, Lajpat Rai avoided his own commitment on Non-Co-operation but in winding up the session he warned that Gandhi's plan would not be practised effectively and would not succeed in paralyzing the Government.¹⁶⁵ However, Gandhi's resolution was approved by a majority vote.

Following the special Calcutta Congress, Lajpat Rai contended that Gandhi's resolution on complete Non-Co-operation was not binding. He urged its application only in a gradual form, and expressed his disapproval of the item to withdraw children and students from Government sponsored schools.¹⁶⁶

The thirty-fifth session of the Congress met in Nagpur in December 1920 to ratify the Non-Co-operation resolution of the special Calcutta Congress. On the eve of the Nagpur session, Lajpat Rai attempted to form, with C. R. Das and Madan Mohan Malaviya, an opposition block against Gandhi.¹⁶⁷ Yet on the opening of the session Lajpat Rai was pressed by the Punjabi delegates to support Gandhi fully or forfeit his leadership of the Punjab.¹⁶⁸ In

¹⁶³ *The Hindu*, 2 September 1920, letter dated 30 August 1920, significantly from Simla.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 9 September 1920 (There is no Report of the special Calcutta Congress).

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ P.N.N.R. *Bande Mataram*, 19 September 1920.

¹⁶⁷ *Statesman*, 18 November 1928, obituary on Lajpat Rai.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

the session Gandhi declared the following new creed of the Congress, "The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of Swaraj by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means."¹⁶⁹ In supporting this resolution, Lajpat Rai explained that the word Swaraj was deliberately chosen for its ambiguity in order to enable Indians to remain within the projected Commonwealth or to leave it, according to their own preference. "As to the British Empire", he continued, "I would rather be a slave than willingly consent to be a part of an Empire which enslaves so many millions of human beings. I do not want to share the rights and responsibilities of such an Empire."¹⁷⁰

While the Nagpur session declared complete Non-Co-operation, the moderates met under the new name of "The National Liberal Federation of India" at Madras and passed a resolution which emphatically disapproved of the policy of Non-Co-operation.¹⁷¹

In January 1921, Banerjea was knighted and appointed Minister of Local Self-Government. In May 1921, when Non-Co-operators under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi were renouncing honorary titles and were resigning from the Legislative Councils, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Sir Surendranath Banerjea corresponded on the desirability of sending a deputation of moderates to solicit from the Viceroy, Lord Reading, a strong declaration of policy against the extremists.

The moderates and the extremists were now poles apart.

¹⁶⁹ *Report of the thirty-fifth I.N.C. Nagpur 1920*, p. 47.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹⁷¹ *Report of the third session of the National Liberal Federation of India, Madras 1920*, Resolution VI.

EPILOGUE

IN ACCEPTING knighthood and ministerial office, Banerjea incurred severe denunciation. Comments ranged from, "Lucky Sir Surendranath Banerjea, he will now earn Rs. 64,000 per annum from the pockets of his starving countrymen";¹ to, "It will help him to die unhonoured, unwept, and unsung."² He was called a political imposter, a renegade, and a traitor, and was completely alienated from the nationalist movement. In 1906 Banerjea was the hero of Barisal when he was fined by Mr. Emerson, Commissioner of Dacca Division, yet in 1921, when he toured Bengal as a Minister, a hartal was observed wherever he went, and the same Mr. Emerson came to Barisal to ensure his protection.³

In November 1923, Banerjea was defeated in the elections to the Bengal Legislative Council by Bidhan Chandra Roy, an insignificant Swarajist candidate⁴—a fact which patently made Banerjea's defeat all the more humiliating and upon which Banerjea commented: "The dominance of the Swarajists has demoralized the public life of Bengal. The purity of the past is gone. Force and fraud have become determining factors in deciding public issues."⁵

Banerjea's *A Nation in Making* is dedicated "To the memory of the founders and early builders of the Indian National Congress, whose achievements the present generation is apt to forget, but who have placed India firmly on the road to constitutional freedom to be attained by constitutional means." It is interlarded with retrospective remarks such as "The practice of throwing overboard our veterans, of calling them men of yesterday had not yet begun";⁶ "He called me his political guru; but so did many others without his fervour or devotion, and who are [now] too

¹ *Amrita Bazar Patrika*: cited in *Englishman*, 3 January 1921.

² *P.N.N.R. Sikh* (Lahore) 2 January 1921.

³ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, pp. 351-353.

⁴ *Statesman*, 25 November 1923 (by 5,688 to 2,283 votes).

⁵ Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, p. 382.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

ready to fling mud at their guru";⁷ "We worship our gods of clay and stone in the firm faith that the Divine Spirit dwells therein, but the living gods who move about us and amongst us, doing, daring, dying for the country, are nowhere in our estimation . . . A nation that does not know how to honour its heroes does not deserve to have them and will not have them."⁸

In contrasting his popular election to the Bengal Legislative Council in 1892, with the Non-Co-operation movement, he wrote: "What a change now from those times—what a deterioration in the public life of the province, when mendacity and malice are now the weapons . . . employed by those who call themselves the apostles of self-government and promise Swaraj to their countrymen! Swaraj means self-restraint."⁹ He exaggeratedly represented his role in the 1905-1906 agitation against the partition of Bengal in the following terms: "We religiously avoided unconstitutional methods and the wild hysterics that breed and stimulate them. Even when attacked by the police, we did not retaliate. We shouted *Bande Mataram* at each stroke of the police lathi, and then appealed to the constituted courts of law for redress. Passive resistance we practised. Soul-force we believed in, but we never were under the delusion that it could be employed to any useful or national purpose, except by men trained in the practice of self-restraint and the discipline of the public life."¹⁰

Although Banerjea ranked below Pherozeshah Mehta or Gokhale, he was the trumpet voice of the Congress. No matter who presided over the Congress, Banerjea was, session after session, its central figure.¹¹ The following observation of the Calcutta correspondent of the *Madras Standard* illustrates Banerjea's role in Bengal: "Mr. Surendranath Banerjea has gone up country on health holiday . . . Until Mr. Banerjea comes back to town no attempt will be made to send delegates to the National Congress. It is he who goads the lethargic people here to action in this and other political matters. He is in short the main spring of all political action in Bengal."¹²

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 263-264.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

¹¹ C. Y. Chintamani, *Indian Politics since the Mutiny*, p. 68.

¹² *Bengalee*, 3 November 1894.

Banerjéa rejected the charge that he turned traitor by contending: "For self-government, step by step, stage by stage, I have worked through life. I worked for it when really nobody in India dreamt of it . . . when the Government treated it as a fantastic dream . . . Our efforts, persistent and strenuous, have changed all this . . . The message of August 20th is a tribute to our success. We were now invited to co-operate and to join hands with the Government in order to ensure the success of the very thing for which we had been fighting for nearly half a century . . . Should we have rejected this offer . . .? I have no hesitation in saying that it would have been unwise, unpatriotic, almost treacherous to do so . . . Therefore . . . did I join the Government in a ministerial position . . . It is not we who have changed, but the Government which according to its lights, is adapting itself to the rapidly progressive tendencies of modern India."¹³ And again: "In my case I claim that I have never changed in fundamentals . . . In the first years of my public life, it was all opposition—strenuous, persistent and unremitting. But when at last the Government showed signs of an advance to meet the popular demand, and took definite measures towards that end, my opposition gave place to a readiness for co-operation . . . To oppose where we should co-operate would be the height of unpatriotism; it would be something worse, it would be treason against the motherland."¹⁴

On the other hand, Banerjéa criticized the leaders of the Non-Co-operation movement for having stirred mass agitation which bred hatred to political and religious opponents and culminated in a Hindu-Muslim feud.¹⁵

He justified the acceptance of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms by emphasizing that "the ideal must be subordinated to the practical . . . Evolution is the supreme law of life and affairs. Our environments, such as they are, must be improved and developed, stage by stage, point by point, till the ideal of the present generation becomes the actual of the next."¹⁶

His ideal was a self-governing India within the British Empire.

¹³ Banerjéa, *A Nation in Making*, pp. 390-391.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 312-313.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 320.

"The Empire is yours, but it is also ours", he declared before a meeting of English Rotarians in Calcutta, "You are the natural heirs; we are the adopted children of the Empire."¹⁷ And wrote: "The Imperial civic spirit must have its roots in local patriotism . . . what is the Empire, but the Commonwealth of a congeries of self-governing nations, each protecting and safeguarding its special interests, with justice to all, and with an eye to the solidarity of the Imperial system."¹⁸ Throughout his career Banerjea consistently adhered to this ideal.

When he died in August 1925 at the age of seventy-seven, he was the last of the veteran Congressmen and was rightly termed "The pioneer and father of Indian Nationalism".¹⁹

Lajpat Rai lived until 1928. In October 1920 he was elected president of the first All-India Trade Union Congress in which he declared: "Militarism and Imperialism are the twin children of Capitalism", and called for the organization of labour against Indian capitalists and against the Government.²⁰ In the Nagpur Congress he supported Gandhi's resolution for complete Non-Co-operation and during 1921 advocated civil disobedience. Contrary to Banerjea's emphasis on gradual and peaceful advancement, Lajpat Rai stressed that peace and order under British rule amounted to the peace of the graveyard.²¹ He charged the moderates with treason for having supported the Government's repression of the Non-Co-operation movement. He asserted that, "To be loyal to a foreign Government is disloyalty to the country and its people. . . . The moderates are anxious to maintain the present Government even with its shortcomings because they have no confidence in the capacity of the people of India to set up a Government. . . . The moderates think that the country is not ripe yet, nor fit for Swaraj. In their judgement Swaraj means the voluntary gift of the control of Indian affairs by the British

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 336.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 373.

¹⁹ See *Englishman*, 7 August 1925, *Statesman*, 7 August 1925, *Times* (London), 7 August 1925.

²⁰ *Report of the first session of the All-India Trade Union Congress*, Bombay 1920, p. 18.

²¹ Lajpat Rai, "Peace and Life", *Modern Review*, June 1921, pp. 743-745.

Parliament to a handful of educated people.”²² “They want ‘Reforms’ from above, we want to build a National State from below. . . . It is our duty to declare plainly that the form of representative Government which prevails in Great Britain is not our goal; that the European form of democracy which prevails in Europe is not our ideal; and that we should rather be saved from the economic life and ideals of Europe than become rich by adopting them. We want a democracy that will recognize no masters and slaves . . . we want a democracy in which all will be brothers and co-workers. . . . If the British Government were sincerely anxious to help us to a state of self-government, then the best, the wisest and the most practical thing for it to do would be to leave us free to organize our own Government in our own indigenous way. . . . The British say: ‘prove that you are fit to govern yourselves and we shall retire’. . . . But fitness for self-government will come only from power. *The measure of our power to impose our will on them will be the proof of our fitness.* . . . By no fiction can it be postulated that the Indian people are a part of the British nation and citizens of the British Empire. . . . For any Indian nationalist to build any hopes on the English sense of justice, or on English promises and pledges is the merest moonshine and pure delusion . . . let us once and for all understand that there is no use in deceiving ourselves. . . . There can be no willing co-operation between a foreign government and a subject people. Let us not hug our yoke to our bosom and be proud of it simply because it is gilded and velveted. The honours they confer on us and the places and the privileges they bestow are the price of our shame and the evidence of our subjection. . . . One cannot understand how a member of a subject people can make an alliance with the rulers—in order to make their rule more effective—and still claim to be a sincere patriot desiring the freedom of his country. The two things are entirely incompatible and inconsistent. There can be no Empire without dependent and subject peoples.”²³

In January 1922 Lajpat Rai was imprisoned, and was released in September 1923. By April 1925 he became exasperated by the failure of Non-Co-operation and criticized Gandhi for being

²² *Nationalists versus Moderates*, Madras 1921.

²³ Lajpat Rai, *Ideals of Non-Co-operation*, Madras 1921, pp. 40-112.

too much of an idealist with regard to Hindu-Muslim relations.²⁴ While in November 1920 Lajpat Rai called for Hindu-Muslim unity on the basis that "though our religion is different, we live on the same earth and under the same sky, our race and descent are the same, forget the bitter memories of old for the sake of Swaraj",²⁵ in May 1925 he protested against the gains made by Muslims at the expense of party divisions among Hindus.²⁶ He was elected president of the Hindu Mahasabha of the Punjab in May 1925, but strongly emphasized that the Hindu Mahasabha should limit its activity to non-political issues,²⁷ and strove to clarify this reservation in the session of the Hindu Mahasabha on 10 December 1925 as follows: "We are prepared to embrace Muslims as brethren, but in no case, will we allow Muslim or any community to dominate over the other communities in politics."²⁸

On 8 December 1925 Lajpat Rai successfully contested the election to the Central Legislative Council. When he entered the Council in 1926 he joined the Swarajist party and was elected its deputy leader, but he repudiated the "walk in walk out" policy; resigned, and formed with Madan Mohan Malaviya the Independent Party in order to counterpoise the Muslim members in the Council.²⁹ In pursuing this policy and on his demand that the Congress should back the Hindu Mahasabha,³⁰ it may seem that he abandoned the idea of Hindu-Muslim unity. In a series of eight articles during November and December, 1924, in the *Tribune*, Lajpat Rai made a religio-political analysis of Hindu-Muslim relations and asserted that the Khilafat movement had strengthened among the Muslims, sectarianism and narrow minded bigotry.³¹ He argued that in contrast to the tolerance of Hinduism towards other peoples' right to follow their respective religious faiths, Islam was dogmatic, doctrinaire, and intolerant of

²⁴ Lajpat Rai, "The Present Political Situation in India", *Hindustan Review*, April 1925, pp. 240-248.

²⁵ Speech at Rawalpindi, in Lajpat Rai, *India's Will to Freedom*, p. 164.

²⁶ *Hindustan Review*, April 1925, pp. 240-248.

²⁷ *The Hindu* (Madras), 14 May 1925.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 10 December 1925.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 22 November 1928 and *Statesman*, 18 November 1928.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 17 December 1925.

³¹ *Tribune*, 30 November 1924.

other religions. Hence, he contended that as long as Islam regarded Hindus as Kafirs "all talk of unity between Hindus and Muslim is absurd."³² He therefore suggested that the Punjab should be partitioned into two provinces. Western Punjab, with a large Muslim majority, to form a Muslim governed Province, and Eastern Punjab, with a large Hindu and Sikh majority, to be a non-Muslim governed Province.³³ And added, "under my scheme the Muslims will have four Muslim States. (1) The Pathan Province or the North-West Province, (2) Western Punjab, (3) Sindh, (4) Eastern Bengal.

If there are compact Muslim communities in any other part of India sufficiently large to form a Province, they should be similarly constituted. *But it should be distinctly understood that this is not a united India. It means a clear partition of India into Muslim India and a non-Muslim India.*"³⁴ But he concluded his articles with the wishful hope, "Let us live and struggle for freedom as brothers whose interests are one and indivisible. Let us live and die for each other, so that India may live and prosper as a Nation. India is neither Hindu nor Muslim. It is not even both. It is one. It is India."³⁵

Alluding to these articles, Choudhary Rahmat Ali wrote: "The Caste Hindu Leader Lala Lajpat Rai suggested the partition of India into Hindu India and Muslim India in 1924."³⁶ Yet in December 1928 Lajpat Rai reaffirmed his hope in Hindu-Muslim unity in the following declaration at a session of the Hindu Mahasabha. "In my judgement the cry of a Hindu Raj or of a Muslim Raj is purely mischievous and ought to be discouraged. The correct thing for us to do is to strive for a democratic Raj in which the Hindus, the Muslims and the other communities may participate as Indians and not as followers of any particular religion."³⁷

In his writings from 1919 he emphasized the need to prevent

³² *Ibid.*, 5 December 1924.

³³ *Ibid.*, 14 December 1924.

³⁴ *Tribune*, 14 December 1924.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 17 December 1924.

³⁶ Choudhary Rahmat Ali, *Pakistan, the Fatherland of the Pak Nation*. Cambridge, 1947, p. 217.

³⁷ *Modern Review*, December 1928, p. 741.

the development of Indian nationalism into chauvinism³⁸ and noted, "The world is tending to become one family. Anyone who aspires or plans to obstruct the process is a traitor to his country as well as to humanity at large. . . . The unity of Asia is going to be brought about by Europe and European thought. Fear of Europe will unite Asia, and then the fear of Asia in its turn will bring about the unity of Europe and Asia."³⁹ Hence, he contended that the future peace of Asia and Europe depended upon whether India remained in bondage or whether she became free,⁴⁰ and wrote: "As long as India is under the political and economic domination of the white people. . . . Asia and Africa would remain exploited by Europe. India's political subordination is the key to the political bondage of all the coloured races of the world."⁴¹ Or in other words, "Europe's dominance over Asia virtually began with the conquest of India and God willing will end with her emancipation."⁴² Yet, in declaring his creed, he stressed that the essential problem for India was not how to turn out the British but how to create harmony and union,⁴³ and in his last written essay came out against the demand for immediate complete independence, because he believed it impeded constructive political and social work, and advocated the acceptance of Dominion status.⁴⁴

While in 1907 Lajpat Rai declared "Mine is a religion of hope and faith. I believe in struggle—a righteous, stern and unyielding struggle. I am quite prepared for defeats and repulses. The colossal difficulties in the way of success do not overwhelm me. In fact I am inclined to take them as a greater reason for a more determined struggle."⁴⁵ In July 1928, partly due to ill health,

³⁸ Lajpat Rai, *The Political Future of India*, p. 208 and "The teaching of patriotism", *Modern Review*, June 1919, p. 626.

³⁹ Lajpat Rai, *The Problem of National Education in India*, London, 1920, pp. 81-84.

⁴⁰ Lajpat Rai, *India's Will to Freedom*, pp. 3-4.

⁴¹ *Modern Review*, June 1926, p. 708.

⁴² Lajpat Rai, *Unhappy India: A Reply to Miss Katherine Mayo's Mother India*, Calcutta 1928, Introduction XVIII.

⁴³ *The People*, 25 July 1925.

⁴⁴ "Complete Political Independence Verses Dominion Status", *Modern Review*, November 1928, pp. 600-601.

⁴⁵ *Surat Congress and Conferences. Presidential address by Lajpat Rai at the All-India Swadeshi Conference*, Natesan, Madras 1907, p. 5.

partly to feelings of disappointment, Lajpat Rai expressed (four months before his death) general pessimism in the following extract from his letter to G. D. Birla.

"I have lost faith in everything—in myself, in God, in Humanity, in life, in the world. . . . Everything seems to be ephemeral and the outcome of human vanity. All my life I have fought and struggled against this doctrine. I have thundered from hundreds of platforms that the doctrine which says this world is false. unreal and a delusion is false . . . life is real, life is earnest—seems to me to be nothing more than the cry of unconscious vanity. What is there in life which is real and which one should take in earnest? How can I believe in a God who is said to be just and benevolent, all mighty and omniscient, who rules over this absurd world? . . . The short and the long of it is that I have lost all faith in God and in religion. . . . No one comes upto my ideals. I admire Gandhiji, I admire Malaviyaji, but I often myself indulge in bitter criticism of them. . . . Public life, public activities, public engagements are no longer alluring; they do not attract me; they do not please me, yet I find I cannot live without them. Oh! what am I to do? I am miserable, I am lonely, I am unhappy, yet I hug my miserableness, my loneliness and my unhappiness. I do want to get rid of this state of mind, but I don't know how."⁴⁶

On 30 October 1928, the ostracized Simon Commission arrived at Lahore. In defiance of orders which prohibited public demonstrations in or near the railway station, Lajpat Rai and Madan Mohan Malaviya headed a procession to the station with black flags. On their refusal to disperse, the police charged with lathies and struck Lajpat Rai. The procession was broken up but regrouped and was addressed by Lajpat Rai thus: "Every blow that was hurled at us this afternoon was a nail in the coffin of the British Government."⁴⁷

The assault upon him aggravated his failing health, and he died on 17 November 1928.

In assessing the overall contribution of the moderates and the extremists towards the attainment of India's independence, the militant agitation of the extremists rather than the constitutional

⁴⁶ G. D. Birla, *In the Shadow of the Mahatma*, Calcutta 1953, p. 30.

⁴⁷ *Times* (London), 31 October 1928.

methods of the moderates was chiefly responsible for the transfer of power in 1947. Yet, within the larger context of Indian history, the moderates were the real revolutionaries, in having successfully introduced parliamentary democracy to India—a system of government which is foreign to Indian traditional political ideas and government. In this respect the extremists were traditionalists who sought inspiration from India's past, but whose role was to accelerate the revolution which was begun by the moderates.

APPENDIX I

SELECT RESOLUTIONS OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS 1885, 1905, 1908, 1920

FIRST CONGRESS—BOMBAY—1885

Royal Commission

1. That this Congress earnestly recommends that the promised inquiry into the working of the Indian Administration, here and in England, should be entrusted to a Royal Commission, the people of India being adequately represented thereon, and evidence taken both in India and in England.

Abolition of the India Council

2. That this Congress considers the abolition of the Council of the Secretary of State for India, as at present constituted, the necessary preliminary to all other reforms.

Expansion of Legislative Councils

3. That this Congress considers the reform and expansion of the Supreme and existing Local Legislative Councils, by the admission of a considerable proportion of elected members, (and the creation of similar Councils for the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, and also for the Punjab) essential; and holds that all Budgets should be referred to these Councils for consideration, their members being moreover empowered to interpellate the Executive in regard to all branches of the administration; and that a Standing Committee of the House of Commons should be constituted to receive and consider any formal protests that may be recorded by majorities of such Councils against the exercise by the Executive of the power, which would be vested in it, of overruling the decisions of such majorities.

Simultaneous Examinations in England and India

4. That in the opinion of this Congress, the competitive exam-

inations now held in England for first appointments in various civil departments of the public services should henceforth, in accordance with the views of the India Office Committee of 1860, "be held simultaneously, one in England and one in India, both being as far as practicable identical in their nature, and those who compete in both countries being finally classified in one list according to merit," and that the successful candidates in India should be sent to England for further study, and subjected there to such further examinations as may seem needful. Further, that all other first appointments (excluding peonships and the like) should be filled by competitive examinations held in India, under conditions calculated to secure such intellectual, moral, and physical qualifications as may be decided by Government to be necessary. Lastly, that the maximum age of candidates for entrance into the Covenanted Civil Service be raised to not less than 23 years.

Military Expenditure

5. That in the opinion of this Congress, the proposed increase in the military expenditure of the empire is unnecessary, and regard being had to the revenues of the empire and the existing circumstances of the country, excessive.

6. That in the opinion of this Congress, if the increased demands for military expenditure are not to be, as they ought to be, met by retrenchment, they ought to be met firstly, by the re-imposition of the Customs duties; and secondly, by the extension of the licence tax to those classes of the community, official and non-official, at present exempted from it, care being taken that in the case of all classes a sufficiently high taxable minimum be maintained. And, further, that this Congress is of opinion that Great Britain should extend an imperial guarantee to the Indian debt.

Annexation of Upper Burmah

7. That this Congress deprecates the annexation of Upper Burmah, and considers that if the Government unfortunately decide on annexation, the entire country of Burmah should be separated from the Indian Viceroyalty and constituted a Crown

Colony, as distinct in all matters from the Government of the country, as is Ceylon.

Congress Resolutions

8. That the resolutions passed by this Congress be communicated to the Political Associations in each province, and that these Associations be requested, with the help of similar bodies and other agencies within their respective provinces, to adopt such measures as they may consider calculated to advance the settlement of the various questions dealt with in these resolutions.

Next Congress

9. That the Indian National Congress re-assemble next year in Calcutta and sit on Tuesday, 28 December, 1866, and the next succeeding days.

TWENTY-FIRST CONGRESS—BENARES—1905

The Royal Visit

1. That this Congress representing His Majesty's Indian subjects of all races, creeds and communities, most humbly and respectfully offers its loyal and dutiful welcome to Their Royal Highnesses, the Prince and Princess of Wales, on the occasion of their visit to India. The Congress is deeply touched by the expression of Their Royal Highnesses' sentiments of cordial goodwill towards the people of India and is confident that the personal knowledge gained during the present tour will stimulate their kindly interest in the welfare of its people; and it expresses the fervent hope that His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales will be graciously pleased to submit to His Majesty the King-Emperor its earnest prayer that the principles of the late Queen's Proclamation will be given effect to in the government of this country.

(a) That the President do submit the above Resolution to His Royal Highness by wire.

Expansion of Legislative Councils

2. That in the opinion of this Congress the time has arrived for a further expansion and reform of the Supreme and Provincial

Legislative Councils, so that they may become more truly representative of the people, and the non-official members thereof may have a real voice in the government of the country. The Congress recommends an increase in the number of the non-official and elected members and the grant to them of the right of dividing the Councils in financial matters coming before them—the head of the Government concerned possessing the power of veto.

Excise Policy and Administration

3. (a) That this Congress, while thanking the Government of India for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the Excise Administration in the several provinces of the country, regrets that its composition is exclusively official and that, therefore, it cannot inspire full public confidence.

(b) This Congress, concurring in the opinion of the previous Congress, expresses its deliberate conviction that the recognition of the principle of local option in practical administration and a large reduction in the number of existing liquor-shops are conditions precedent to any satisfactory reform in Excise Administration.

(c) This Congress respectfully urges on the Government of India the desirability of speedily carrying out the principal proposal contained in Sir Frederick Lely's memorandum of last year on Excise Administration.

(d) That the Congress begs to protest against the virtual shelving by the Government of India in its executive capacity, of the Bengal Excise Bill, which has been welcomed as a sound and progressive piece of temperance legislation.

Representation in Parliament and the Executive Councils

4. That in the opinion of this Congress the time has arrived when the people of India should be allowed a larger voice in the administration and control of the affairs of their country by—

(a) the bestowal on each of the Provinces of India of the franchise to return at least two members to the British House of Commons;

(b) the appointment of not less than three Indian gentlemen

of proved ability and experience as members of the Secretary of State's Council; and

(c) the appointment of two Indians as members of the Governor-General's Executive Council and of one Indian as a member of the Executive Councils of Bombay and Madras.

Parliamentary Control Over Indian Affairs

5. That this Congress is of opinion that to enable Parliament to discharge more satisfactorily its responsibility in regard to the Government of India, periodical Parliamentary enquiries into the condition of India should be revived and the salary of the Secretary of State for India should be placed on the British Estimates.

Public Service

6. (a) That, in the opinion of this Congress, the principles and policy enunciated by the Government of India in their Resolution dated 24 May, 1904, on the subject of the employment of Indians in the higher grades of the Public Service, are inconsistent with those laid down in the Parliamentary Statute of 1833 and the Proclamation of 1858 by the late Queen-Empress, and this Congress enters its respectful but emphatic protest against an attempt to explain away pledges solemnly given by the Sovereign and Parliament to the people of this country, and to deviate from arrangements deliberately arrived at by the Government after a careful examination of the whole question by a public commission.

(b) That this Congress is of opinion that the true remedy for many existing financial and administrative evils lies in the wider employment of Indians in the higher branches of the country's service; and while concurring with previous Congresses in urging that immediate effect should be given to the Resolutions of the House of Commons of 2 June, 1893, in favour of holding the competitive examinations for the Civil Services simultaneously in England and in India, this Congress places on record its firm conviction that the only satisfactory solution of this question is to be found in the re-organisation of the Indian Civil Service, which should be reconstituted on a decentralised basis, its judicial functions in the meantime being partly transferred to persons who have been trained in the profession of law.

(c) That this Congress, concurring in the opinion of the last Congress, deploras the abolition of the competitive test for the Provincial Service. Past experience has amply established the fact that a system of Government nomination degenerates, in the special circumstances of this country, into a system of appointment by official favour, and this, by bringing unfit men into the service, impairs the efficiency of the administration and in addition, unfairly discredits the fitness of Indians for high office. This Congress, therefore, respectfully urges the Government of India to restore the competitive test for the Provincial Service.

Indian Finance

7. That this Congress, while appreciating the action of the Government of India in applying a portion of its surplus revenues last March to some of the purposes recommended by the Congress, is of opinion that the financial relief given by it to the taxpayers of this country during the last three years has been most inadequate, and the Congress regrets that advantage has been taken of recent surpluses to increase largely the Military expenditure of the country, raise the salaries of European officials in several departments and create a number of new posts for them. The Congress urges that any surpluses that may arise in the future should, in the first place, be utilised for purposes of remission of taxation, and, secondly, be devoted to subjects directly benefiting the people such as imparting scientific, industrial and agricultural education, providing increased facilities of medical relief, and assisting Municipal and Local Boards with grants to undertake urgently needed measures of sanitary reform and the improvement of means of communication in the interior.

Military Expenditure

8. (a) That this Congress, while recording its emphatic protest against any charge which weakens the supremacy of the Civil control over the Military authorities, is of opinion that the necessary Civil control cannot be adequately exercised until and unless the representatives of the taxpayers are placed in a position to influence such control.

(b) That this Congress earnestly repeats its protest against

the continued increases in the Military expenditure, which is unnecessary, unjust and beyond the capacity of the Indian people.

(c) That this Congress is distinctly of opinion that, as the Military expenditure of this country is determined not by its own Military needs and requirements alone but also by the exigencies of British supremacy and British policy in the East, it is only fair that a proportionate share of such expenditure should be met out of the British Exchequer and shared by the Empire at large instead of the whole of such expenditure falling on a part of the Empire which is the poorest and the least able to bear it.

(d) That, in view of the changed position of affairs in Asia due to the recent war between Russia and Japan and the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, this Congress earnestly urges that the large expenditure of ten millions sterling sanctioned last year for the re-organisation scheme be not now incurred, and the money be devoted to an extension of education in all branches and reduction of the ryots' burdens.

Indians in British Colonies

9. (a) That this Congress, while expressing its sense of satisfaction at the passing by the Australian House of Representatives of a Bill to amend the Law of Immigration so as to avoid hurting the susceptibilities of the people of India, again places on record its sense of deep regret that British Indians should continue to be subjected to harassing and degrading restrictions and denied the ordinary rights of British citizenship in His Majesty's Colonies. The Congress particularly protests against the enforcement by the British Government of disabilities on the Indian Settlers in the Transvaal and Orange River Crown Colonies, which were not enforced even under the old Boer rule, in spite of declarations by His Majesty's Ministers that the treatment of the Indian subjects of the King-Emperor by the Boer Government was one of the causes of the late war.

(b) In view of the important part the Indian Settlers have played in the development of the Colonies, their admitted loyalty and peaceful and industrious habits, their useful and self-sacrificing services during the recent war, and, above all, the great constitutional importance of the principle of equal treatment of

all citizens of the Empire anywhere in the King's dominions, this Congress respectfully, but strongly, urges the Government of India and His Majesty's Government to insist, by prohibiting, if necessary, the emigration of indentured labour and adopting other retaliatory measures, on the recognition of the status of Indian emigrants as British citizens in all the Colonies.

Administration of Justice

10. (a) That in the opinion of this Congress a complete separating of judicial from executive functions must now be carried out without further delay.

(b) That this Congress, concurring with previous Congresses urges that the Judicial Service in all parts of the country should be recruited from the legal profession more largely than at present as the system of appointing Civilians without special legal training to high judicial offices does not lead to a satisfactory administration of justice in the mofussil.

Police Reform

11. That this Congress, while noting with satisfaction some useful reforms recommended by the Police Commission, regrets that adequate measures have not been adopted to materially improve the efficiency and the honesty of the Police Service.

This Congress records its conviction:

(1) That competitive examinations for the recruitment of the Police Service in the higher grades should be thrown open to all classes of British subjects instead of being confined to candidates of British birth, and that such examinations should be held simultaneously in England and in India.

(2) That educated Indians should be largely employed in the higher grades in order to secure efficiency in work.

(3) That enlistment in the Provincial Service should be by competitive examinations.

(4) And lastly, that District Officers, who are the heads of the Police, should be relieved of judicial work and of all control over the Magistracy of the District.

Partition of Bengal

12. That this Congress records its emphatic protest against the

Partition of Bengal in the face of the strongest opposition on the part of the people of the province.

That, having regard to the intense dissatisfaction felt by the entire Bengali community at the dismemberment of their province and their manifest disinclination to accept the partition as an accomplished fact, this Congress appeals to the Government of India and the Secretary of State to reverse or modify the arrangements made, in such a manner as to conciliate public opinion and allay the excitement and unrest present among all classes of the people.

That this Congress recommends the adoption of some arrangement which would be consistent with administrative efficiency and would place the entire Bengali community under one undivided administration.

Repressive Measures in Bengal

13. That this Congress records its earnest and emphatic protest against the repressive measures which have been adopted by the authorities in Bengal after the people there had been compelled to resort to the boycott of foreign goods as a last protest and perhaps the only constitutional and effective means left to them of drawing the attention of the British public to the action of the Government of India in persisting in their determination to partition Bengal in utter disregard of the universal prayers and protests of the people.

Education

14. (a) That this Congress repeats its protest against the present policy of the Government of India in respect of High and Secondary Education, as being one of officialising the governing bodies of the Universities and restricting the spread of education.

(b) That this Congress, while thanking the Government of India for the special grants made this year to Primary and High Education, again places on record its firm conviction that the material and moral interests of the country demand a much larger expenditure than at present on all branches of education and a beginning in the direction of Free Primary Education.

(c) That, in the opinion of this Congress, the recommend-

ations of the Committee on Industrial Education should be promptly carried out by the Government. The Congress specially urges the Government to order an Industrial Survey as recommended by the Committee (and as suggested by the Government of India itself in its Home Department Resolution No. 199, dated 18th June, 1888) as a necessary preliminary to the introduction of an organised system of technical education in the several provinces.

(d) That at least one central fully equipped Polytechnic Institute should be established in the country, with minor technical schools and colleges in the different provinces.

Economic Inquiry and Land Revenue Policy

15. (a) That this Congress deplores a fresh outbreak of famine in several parts of the country; and, holding that the frequent recurrence of famines is due to the great poverty of the people, which forces large numbers of them to throw themselves on State help at the first touch of scarcity, it again urges the Government of India and the Secretary of State to institute a detailed inquiry into the economic condition of a few typical villages in different parts of India.

(b) This Congress is of opinion that the prosperity of an agricultural country like India cannot be secured without a definite limitation of the State demand on land, such as was proposed by Lord Canning in 1862 or by Lord Ripon in 1882, and it regrets that Lord Curzon in his Land Resolution of 1902 failed to recognize any such limitation and declined to accept the suggestions of the Right Hon'ble Sir Richard Garth and other memorialists in the matter. The Congress holds that a reasonable and definite limitation of the State-demand, and not the restriction of tenants' rights, such as has found favour, in recent years, is the true remedy for the growing impoverishment of the agricultural population.

Quarantine against Mahomedan Pilgrims

16. That, having regard to the fact that there is ten days' international quarantine already in existence at Caamarn, this Congress holds that the quarantine of five days imposed at the port of Bombay upon the Musalman pilgrims before embarking for

Jeddah, is unnecessary and vexatious, and produces a feeling of deep discontent. The Congress, therefore, prays that the quarantine imposed at Bombay be entirely abolished.

Important Provincial Questions

17. This Congress, concurring with previous Congresses, strongly urges:—

(1) The constitution of the Punjab into a Regulation province;

(2) The expansion and reform of the Punjab Legislative Council in accordance with the Indian Councils Act of 1892;

(3) The establishment of a Chartered High Court of Judicature in the Punjab;

(4) The enactment of Legislation for Berar by the Supreme Legislative Council and not by Executive orders of the Governor-General in Council;

(5) The restoration to the people of the Central Provinces of the right to elect their representative on the Supreme Legislative Council instead of being nominated by the Government; and

(6) The cancellation of the Government of India Notification of 25th June, 1891, in the Foreign Department, gagging the Press in territories under British administration in Native States as being a serious infringement of the liberty of the Press in those tracts.

India and the General Election

18. That this Congress desires to accord its most cordial support to the candidature of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji for North Lambeth, and appeals to the Electors of that Constituency to return him to Parliament.

Thanks to Messrs. Gokhale and Lajpat Rai

19. That this Congress desires to record its sense of high appreciation of the valuable services recently rendered by the Hon'ble Mr. G. K. Gokhale, C.I.E., and Lala Lajpat Rai in England.

Congress Delegate to England

20. That in view of the importance of urging the more pressing

proposals of the Congress on the attention of the authorities in England at the present juncture this Congress appoints its President, the Hon'ble Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, C.I.E., as its Delegate and deposes him to proceed to England for this purpose.

Standing Committee of the Congress

21. That a Standing Committee of the Congress be appointed to promote the objects of the Congress and to take such steps during the year as may be necessary to give effect to the resolutions of the Congress.

That the following gentlemen be appointed Members of the Standing Committee for the year 1906:—

- (1) The Hon. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, K.C.I.E. (Bombay);
- (2) The Hon. Mr. Daji Abaji Khare (Bombay);
- (3) G. Subramania Iyer, Esq. (Madras);
- (4) The Hon. Nawab Sayyid Muhammad (Madras);
- (5) Surendranath Banerjea, Esq. (Calcutta);
- (6) A. Chowdhri, Esq. (Calcutta);
- (7) Maulvi Abdul Kasim (Burdwan);
- (8) S. Sinha, Esq. (Bankipur);
- (9) The Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (Allahabad);
- (10) Munshi Ganga Prasad Varma (Lucknow);
- (11) Lala Lajpat Rai (Lahore);
- (12) Lala Harkishenlal (Lahore); and
- (13) Rao Bahadur R. N. Mudholkar (Amraoti); with
- (14) D. E. Wacha, Esq. (Bombay); and
- (15) The Hon. Mr. G. K. Gokhale, C.I.E. (Poona) as Secretaries for the Committee.

Thanks to the British Committee

22. That this Congress desires to convey to Sir William Wedderburn, Bart., and the other members of the British Committee, its most grateful thanks for their disinterested services in the cause of India's political advancement.

Congress General Secretaries

23. That this Congress re-appoints A. O. Hume, Esq., C.B., to be General Secretary, and D. E. Wacha, Esq., and the Hon'ble

Mr. G. K. Gokhale, C.I.E., to be Joint-General Secretaries for the ensuing year.

Next Congress

24. That the Twenty-second Indian National Congress do assemble, on such day after Christmas Day, 1906, as may be later determined upon at Calcutta.

TWENTY-FOURTH CONGRESS—MADRAS—1908

I. The Royal Message

The Indian National Congress tenders its loyal homage to His Gracious Majesty the King Emperor and respectfully welcomes the message sent by His Majesty to the Princes and Peoples of India on the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Memorable Proclamation issued in 1858 by his Illustrious Mother VICTORIA THE GOOD.

This Congress begs to record its satisfaction that the interpretation placed by it upon the pledges contained in that "Great Charter of 1858" has been upheld by His Majesty.

This Congress gratefully welcomes the pronouncement made by His Majesty that the time has come when the principle of representative institutions, which, from the first, began to be gradually introduced in India, may be prudently extended and that the politic satisfaction of the claim to equality of citizenship and greater share in legislation and government made by important classes in India, representing ideas that have been fostered and encouraged by British Rule, will strengthen, not impair, existing authority and power.

The Congress looks forward with confidence to a steady fulfilment by those in authority under the Crown, in letter and in spirit, of the pledges and assurances contained in the Great Charter of 1858 and in His Majesty's Message of 1908.

II. Reform Proposals

This Congress desires to give expression to the deep and general satisfaction with which the Reform proposals formulated in Lord Morley's despatch have been received throughout the country; it places on record its sense of the high statesmanship which has dictated the action of the Government in the matter and it tend-

ers to Lord Morley and Lord Minto its most sincere and grateful thanks for their proposals.

This Congress is of opinion that the proposed expansion of the Legislative Councils and the enlargement of their powers and functions in the appointment of Indian members to the Executive Councils with the creation of such Councils where they do not exist, and the further development of Local Self-Government, constitute a large and liberal instalment of the reforms needed to give the people of this country a substantial share in the management of their affairs and bring the administration into closer touch with their wants and feelings.

This Congress expresses its confident hope that the details of the proposed Scheme will be worked out in the same liberal spirit in which its main provisions as outlined in the Secretary of State's despatch have been conceived.

III. Condemnation of Outrages and Deeds of Violence

This Congress places on record its emphatic and unqualified condemnation of the detestable outrages and deeds of violence which have been committed recently in some parts of the country and which are abhorrent to the loyal, humane and peace-loving nature of His Majesty's Indian subjects of every denomination.

IV. Treatment of British Indians in South Africa

This Congress views with the greatest indignation the harsh, humiliating and cruel treatment to which British Indians, even of the highest respectability and position, have been subjected by the British Colonies in South Africa, and expresses its alarm at the likelihood of such treatment resulting in far-reaching consequences of a mischievous character calculated to cause great injury to the best interests of the British Empire, and trusts that the Imperial Parliament when granting the new Constitution to South Africa will secure the interests of the Indian Inhabitants of South Africa.

This Congress begs earnestly to press upon the British Parliament and the Government of India, the desirability of dealing with the self-governing Colonies in the same manner in which the latter ruthlessly deal with Indian interests so long as they adhere to the selfish and one-sided policy which they proclaim

and practise, and persist in their present course of denying to His Majesty's Indian subjects their just rights as citizens of the Empire.

This Congress, while aware of the declaration of responsible statesmen in favour of allowing the self-governing Colonies in the British Empire to monopolise vast undeveloped territories for exclusive white settlements, deems it but right to point out that the policy of shutting the door and denying the rights of full British citizenship to all subjects of the British Crown, while preaching and enforcing the opposite policy in Asia and other parts of the world, is fraught with grave mischief to the Empire and is as unwise as it is unrighteous.

V. Partition of Bengal

This Congress earnestly appeals to the Government of India and the Secretary of State for India to reverse the Partition of Bengal or to modify it in such a manner as to keep the entire Bengali-speaking community under one and the same administration.

This Congress is of opinion that the rectification of this admitted error will restore contentment to the Province of Bengal, give satisfaction to the other Provinces and instead of impairing, will enhance the prestige of His Majesty's Government throughout the Country.

VI. Swadeshi

This Congress accords its most cordial support to the *Swadeshi* movement and calls upon the people of the country to labour for its success by making earnest and sustained efforts to promote the growth of industries capable of development in the country and respond to the efforts of Indian producers by giving preference, wherever practicable, to Indian products over imported commodities, even at a sacrifice.

VII. Imposition of Military Charges

This Congress enters its emphatic protest against the fresh burden of £300,000 which the British War Office has imposed on the Indian Exchequer for military charges on the recommendation of the Romer Committee, the proceedings of which the Under-Secretary of State for India has refused to lay on the

table of the House of Commons, in contravention of previous practice in such matters.

The Congress views with the deepest regret the repeated imposition of military charges by the British War Office on the Indian tax-payer from the date of the Army Amalgamation Scheme of 1859, in regard to which imposition the Government of India has repeatedly remonstrated.

The Congress respectfully urges upon the attention of His Majesty's Government the necessity of revising the Army Amalgamation Scheme of 1859 in the light of the experience of the last fifty years and the desirability of laying down a fair and reasonable principle which shall free the Indian Exchequer from unjust exactions of this character.

VIII. Separation of Judicial and Executive Functions

This Congress records its satisfaction that the proposal for the separation of Executive and Judicial functions has received the sanction of the Government in some definite shape for the Province of Bengal; but is at the same time of opinion that the scheme should also be extended throughout the country and that it will not succeed in its object unless and until the entire Judicial service be placed directly and absolutely under the High Court or Chief Court as the case may be, even in matters of promotion and transfer.

IX. Higher Career to Indians in the Army

This Congress prays that the high recognition of the valour and fidelity of the Indian troops by His Majesty the King Emperor in his message to the Princes and Peoples of India should include the throwing open to Indians of higher career in the Army from which, as this Congress has repeatedly pointed out, they have been hitherto excluded.

X. Repeal of Regulations Relating to Deportation and the Recent Deportations

Having regard to the recent deportations and the grave risk of injustice involved in Government action based upon *ex parte* and untested information and having regard to the penal laws of the country, this Congress strongly urges upon the Government the

repeal of the Bengal Regulation III of 1818 and similar Regulations in other Provinces of India; and it respectfully prays that the persons recently deported in Bengal be given an opportunity of exculpating themselves or for meeting any charges that may be against them, or be set at liberty.

XI. Repressive Measures

This Congress deplores the circumstances that have led to the passing of Act VII of 1908 and Act XIV of 1908, but having regard to their drastic character and to the fact that a sudden emergency can alone afford any justification for such exceptional legislation, this Congress expresses its earnest hope that these enactments will have only a temporary existence in the Indian Statute Book.

XII. Legislative and Administrative Reforms in the Central Provinces and Berar

This Congress urges upon the Government the necessity of

- (i) placing in regard to legislative and administrative matters the Province of Berar on the same footing as the Provinces included in British India and
- (ii) establishing a Legislative Council for the combined territory of the Central Provinces and Berar.

XIII. High Prices of Foodstuffs

This Congress is of opinion that having regard to the high prices of foodstuffs for the past several years and the hardships to which the middle and poorer classes are put thereby, an enquiry should be instituted by Government into the causes of such high prices with a view to ascertain how far and by what remedies such causes could be removed.

XIV. Education

This Congress is of opinion that the Government should take immediate steps,

- (a) to make Primary Education free at once and gradually compulsory throughout the country,
- (b) to assign larger sums of money to Secondary and Higher

Education (special encouragement being given where necessary to educate all backward classes).

(c) to make adequate provision for imparting Industrial and Technical Education in the different Provinces having regard to local requirements, and

(d) to give effective voice to the leaders of Indian public opinion in shaping the policy and system of Education in this country.

In the opinion of this Congress the time has arrived for people all over the country to take up earnestly, the question of supplementing existing institutions and the efforts of Government by organising for themselves an independent system of literary, scientific, technical and industrial education suited to the conditions of the different Provinces in the country.

XV. Land Tax

This Congress is of opinion that the prosperity of an agricultural country like India cannot be secured without a definite limitation of the State demand on land, and it regrets that Lord Curzon in his Land Resolution of 1902 failed to recognise the necessity of any such limitation and declined to accept the suggestions of Sir Richard Garth and other memorialists in the matter.

This Congress holds that in Provinces where the Permanent Settlement does not now exist, a reasonable and definite limitation of the State demand and the introduction of Permanent settlement or a settlement for a period of not less than sixty years are the only true remedies for the growing impoverishment of the agricultural population.

This Congress emphatically protests against the view that the land revenue in India is not a tax but is in the nature of rent.

XVI. This Congress records its sense of the great loss which the country has sustained in the death of I. Babu Kalicharan Banerjea. II. Pandit Bisshumbar Nath. III. Mr. Alfred Webb. IV. Babu Bunsilal Singh, and V. Rai Bahadur P. Ananda Charlu.

XVII. Message to Friends in England

(a) That the following message be addressed by the Congress to Mr. A. O. Hume.

This Congress sends you its cordial greetings and congratulations. The reforms announced by Lord Morley are a partial fruition of the efforts made by the Congress during the last twenty-three years and we are gratified to think that to you as its father and founder they must be a source of great and sincere satisfaction.

(b) This Congress offers its sincere congratulations to Sir William Wedderburn, Bart., on his recent recovery from a serious illness and takes this opportunity to give expression to its deep gratitude for the unflagging zeal and devotion and the love, patience and singleness of purpose with which he has laboured for the Indian cause during the last twenty years and which has been largely instrumental in securing for Congress' views and representations the favourable consideration which they have received in England.

(c) This Congress desires, to convey to the members of the British Committee its grateful thanks for their disinterested and strenuous services in the cause of India's political advancement.

XVIII. The All-India Congress Committee

The following gentlemen are appointed members of the All-India Congress Committee. (*List omitted*).

XIX. The Congress accords its most hearty thanks for the hospitality with which the Reception Committee has received the delegates and the perfection of the arrangements made for their comfort during their stay in Madras. The Congress also thanks the Captain, Lieutenants and Members of the Congress Corps for the trouble they have taken in looking after the comforts of the delegates and in being very diligent in preserving order throughout the Session.

XX. That Mr. D. E. Wacha, and the Hon. Mr. Daji Abaji Khare be appointed General Secretaries for the ensuing year.

XXI. The Congress resolves that the next Congress assemble at Lahore.

THIRTY-SIXTH CONGRESS—NAGPUR—1920

1. *Creed of the Congress and Article 1 of the Congress Constitution*

The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of Swarajya by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means.

2. *Non-Co-operation*

Whereas in the opinion of the Congress the existing Government of India has forfeited the confidence of the country; and whereas the people of India are now determined to establish Swaraj; and whereas all methods adopted by the people of India prior to the last Special Session of the Indian National Congress have failed to secure due recognition of their rights and liberties and the redress of their many and grievous wrongs, more especially in reference to the Khilafat and the Punjab;

Now this Congress while reaffirming the resolution of Non-violent Non-co-operation passed at the Special Session of the Congress at Calcutta declares that the entire or any part or parts of the scheme of Non-violent Non-co-operation with the renunciation of voluntary association with the present Government at one end and the refusal to pay taxes at the other, should be put in force at a time to be determined by either the Indian National Congress or the All-India Congress Committee and that in the meanwhile, to prepare the country for it, effective steps should continue to be taken in that behalf:—

(a) by calling upon the parents and guardians of school children (and not the children themselves) under the age of 16 years to make greater efforts for the purpose of withdrawing them from such schools as are owned, aided or in any way controlled by Government and concurrently to provide for their training in national schools or by such other means as may be within their power in the absence of such schools;

(b) by calling upon students of the age of 16 and over to withdraw without delay, irrespective of consequences, from institutions owned, aided or in any way controlled by Government, if they feel that it is against their conscience to continue in institutions which are dominated by a system of government which

the nation has solemnly resolved to bring to an end, and advising such students either to devote themselves to some special service in connection with the non-co-operation movement or to continue their education in national institutions;

(c) by calling upon trustees, managers and teachers of Government affiliated or aided schools and Municipalities and Local Boards to help to nationalise them;

(d) by calling upon lawyers to make greater efforts to suspend their practice and to devote their attention to national service including boycott of law courts by litigants and fellow lawyers and the settlement of disputes by private arbitration;

(e) in order to make India, economically independent and self contained by calling upon merchants and traders to carry out a gradual boycott of foreign trade relations, to encourage hand-spinning and hand-weaving and in that behalf by having a scheme of economic boycott planned and formulated by a committee of experts to be nominated by the All-India Congress Committee;

(f) and generally, in as much as self-sacrifice is essential to the success of non-co-operation, by calling upon every section and every man and woman in the country to make the utmost possible contribution of self-sacrifice to the national movement;

(g) by organising Committees in each village or group of villages with a provincial central organisation in the principal cities of each Province for the purpose of accelerating the progress of non-co-operation;

(h) by organising a band of national workers for a Service to be called the Indian National Service; and

(i) by taking effective steps to raise a national fund to be called the All India Tilak Memorial Swarajya Fund for the purpose of financing the foregoing National Service and the non-co-operation movement in general.

This Congress congratulates the nation upon the progress made so far in working the programme of non-co-operation especially with regard to the boycott of Councils by the voters, and claims in the circumstances in which they have been brought into existence that the new Councils do not represent the country and trusts that those who have allowed themselves to be elected in spite of the deliberate abstention from the polls of an overwhelm-

ing majority of their constituents, will see their way to resign their seats in the Councils, and that if they retain their seats in spite of the declared wish of their respective constituents in direct negation of the principle of democracy, the electors will studiously refrain from asking for any political service from such Councillors.

This Congress recognises the growing friendliness between the Police and the Soldiery and the people, and hopes that the former will refuse to subordinate their creed and country to the fulfilment of orders of their officers, and, by courteous and considerate behaviour towards the people, will remove the reproach hitherto levelled against them that they are devoid of any regard for the feelings and sentiments of their own people.

And this Congress appeals to all people in Government employment pending the call of the nation for resignation of their service, to help the national cause by importing greater kindness and stricter honesty in their dealings with their people and fearlessly and openly to attend all popular gatherings whilst refraining from taking any active part therein and, more specially, by openly rendering financial assistance to the national movement.

This Congress desires to lay special emphasis on NON-VIOLENCE being the integral part of the non-co-operation resolution and invites the attention of the people to the fact that NON-VIOLENCE in word and deed is as essential between people themselves, as in respect of the Government and this Congress is of opinion that the spirit of violence is not only contrary to the growth of a true spirit of democracy but actually regards the enforcement (if necessary) of the other stages of non-co-operation.

Finally, in order that the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs may be redressed and *Swarajya established within one year*, this Congress urges upon all public bodies, whether affiliated to the Congress or otherwise, to devote their exclusive attention to the promotion of non-violence and non-co-operation with the Government and, inasmuch as the movement of non-co-operation can only succeed by complete co-operation amongst the people themselves, this Congress calls upon public associations to advance Hindu-Muslim unity and the Hindu delegates of this Congress call upon the leading Hindus to settle all disputes between

Brahmins and Non-Brahmins, wherever they may be existing, and to make a special effort to rid Hinduism of the reproach of untouchability, and respectfully urges the religious heads to help the growing desire to reform Hinduism in the matter of its treatment of the suppressed classes.

Resolution No. 3

(1) That in the opinion of this Congress, it is necessary in the interests of India to disseminate correct information about India and Indian questions in foreign countries.

(2) That this Congress, while authorising the All-India Congress Committee to give effect to the foregoing resolution, resolves:—

(a) That the publication of newspaper "India" as an organ of the Congress be discontinued forthwith and the contracts of the present staff be terminated.

(b) That subject to the existing liabilities in connection with the British Congress Committee and newspaper "India", no further financial assistance from the Congress fund be supplied for these purposes.

Resolution No. 4

This Congress pays its homage to the sacred memory of the great Irish patriot Mac-Swiney and sends its message of sympathy to the Irish people in their struggle for Independence.

Resolution No. 5

Whereas His Majesty's Government and the Government of India, by bringing about an unprecedented rise in Indian Sterling Exchange and issuing Reserve Councils in wanton disregard of Indian opinion as expressed in the Minority Report of the Currency Committee, to the enormous and serious loss to the Indian Export Trade, have pursued a ruinous policy conceived in the interests of British manufacturers with the result that Indian Trade and Commerce have been entirely unsettled and dislocated, while the British Treasury has been relieved of a substantial part of its indebtedness to India, and the British capitalists and manufacturers have been given enormous opportunities for dumping into this country goods which could not find their old markets in

Germany and other countries; this Congress calls upon the British Treasury to make good this loss and further declares that importers, merchants and dealers of British goods will be entirely justified in refusing to complete their contracts at the present rate of exchange.

Further, this Congress appoints a committee to be named by All-India Congress Committee to take steps to deal effectively with the situation.

Resolution No. 6

This Congress is of opinion that, in pursuance of non-cooperation, the people of India should refrain from taking any part in functions or festivities in honour of H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught during his forthcoming visit to India.

Resolution No. 7

That this Congress expresses its fullest sympathy with the workers of India in their struggle for securing their legitimate rights through the organisation of Trade Unions and places on record its condemnation of the brutal policy of treating the lives of Indian workers as of no account under the false pretext of preserving law and order.

Resolution No. 8

That this Congress is of the opinion that Indian Labour should be organised with a view to improve and promote their well-being and secure to them their just rights and also to prevent the exploitation (1) of Indian Labour, (2) of Indian resources by foreign agencies, and that the All-India Congress Committee should appoint a committee to take effective steps in that behalf.

Resolution No. 9

This Congress invites the attention of the public to the policy pursued by the Government in the different Provinces of India of forcibly acquiring lands on a large scale in the interests of capitalists and especially foreign capitalists by the reckless and unjustifiable use of the Land Acquisition Act, thus destroying the hearths and homes and the settled occupations of poor classes

and landholders and is of opinion that it affords further grounds for non-co-operation against the Government.

This Congress further appeals to the Indian capitalists concerned and calls upon them to avert the impending ruin of the poor peasants.

Resolution No. 10

This Congress places on record its sincere sympathy with those political workers who have been arrested and imprisoned with or without regular specification of charge and open trial and who are still detained in prison or whose freedom of movement and association are still restricted by executive order, and this Congress expresses the hope that their devotion to their country and the hope of the early attainment of Swaraj which will render these acts of injustice impossible, will sustain them in their present trial.

Resolution No. 11

This Congress is of opinion that having regard to the wide prevalence and generally accepted utility of the Ayurvedic and Unani systems of medicine in India, earnest and definite efforts should be made by the people of this country to further popularise these systems by establishing schools, colleges and hospitals for instruction and treatment in accordance with the indigenous system.

Resolution No. 12

This Congress earnestly requests all the Sovereign Princes of India to take immediate steps to establish full responsible Government in their states.

Resolution No. 13

This Congress notes the resumption, in spite of declarations of the Government of India to the contrary, of repression in the Punjab, Delhi and elsewhere and invites those concerned to bear their sufferings with fortitude and, whilst respecting all lawful orders, to prosecute Non-violent Non-co-operation with redoubled vigour.

Resolution No. 14

As free elementary education is the primary and urgent need of the masses of India, this Congress urges on all Congress organisations to introduce and enforce the same in their respective areas on national lines.

Resolution No. 15

(1) This Congress tenders its thanks to the Muslim Associations for their resolutions against Cow-slaughter.

(2) This Congress recognises the great economic necessity for the protection of cattle and urges upon the people of India to do their best to achieve this object, particularly by refusing to sell cattle or hides for export trade.

Resolution No. 17

This Congress having considered the composition and procedure of the Esher Committee and its report which, if carried out, is calculated to increase the subservience and impotence of India, and is of opinion that the report furnishes strong additional grounds for Non-co-operation and for showing how dangerous it is to postpone the immediate establishment of Swaraj.

Resolution No. 18

Constitution.

APPENDIX II

CONSTITUTION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS: 1908, 1920

CONSTITUTION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS—1908

Objects

Article I

The objects of the Indian National Congress are the attainment by the people of India of a system of government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing Members of the British Empire and participation by them in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with those Members. These objects are to be 'achieved by constitutional means by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration and by promoting national unity, fostering public spirit and developing and organizing the intellectual, moral, economic and industrial resources of the country.

Article II

Every Delegate to the Indian National Congress shall express in writing his acceptance of the Objects of the Congress as laid down in Article I of this Constitution and his willingness to abide by this Constitution and by the Rules of the Congress hereto appended.

Sessions of the Congress

Article III

- (a) The Indian National Congress shall ordinarily meet once every year during Christmas holidays at such town as may have been decided upon at the previous session of the Congress.
- (b) If no such decision has been arrived at, the All-India Congress Committee shall decide the matter.

- (c) An extraordinary session of the Congress may be summoned by the All-India Congress Committee, either of its own motion or on the requisition of a majority of the Provincial Congress Committees, wherever and whenever it may deem it advisable to hold such session.
- (d) It shall be open to the All-India Congress Committee to change the venue of the Congress to some other town, when such change is deemed by it to be necessary or desirable owing to serious or unforeseen difficulties or other contingencies of a like nature.

Component Parts of the Organisation

Article IV

The Indian National Congress Organisation will consist of:

- (a) The Indian National Congress;
- (b) The Provincial Congress Committees;
- (c) District Congress Committees or Associations affiliated to the Provincial Congress Committees;
- (d) Sub-Divisional or Taluka Congress Committees affiliated to the District Congress Committees or Associations;
- (e) Political Associations or Public Bodies recognised as Electorates in accordance with Clause (3) of Article XX;
- (f) The All-India Congress Committee;
- (g) The British Committee of the Congress; and
- (h) Bodies formed or organised periodically by a Provincial Congress Committee, such as the Provincial or District Conferences or the Reception Committee of the Congress or Conference for the year.

Article V

No person shall be eligible to be a member of any of the Provincial or District or other Congress Committees or Associations or Bodies mentioned in clauses (b), (c), (d) and (h) of Article IV, unless he has attained the age of twenty-one and expresses in writing his acceptance of the Objects of the Congress as laid down in Article I of this Constitution and his willingness to

abide by this Constitution and by the Rules of the Congress hereto appended.

Provincial Congress Committees

Article VI

(a) To act for the Province in Congress matters and for organising Provincial or District Conferences in such manner as it may deem proper, there shall be a Provincial Congress Committee with its headquarters at the chief town of the Province in each of the following nine Provinces:

1. Madras; 2. Bombay; 3. United Bengal; 4. United Provinces; 5. Punjab (including North-West Frontier Province); 6. Central Provinces; 7. Bihar; 8. Berar; and 9. Burma.

(b) The Provincial Sub-Committees of the Convention shall, in the first instance, form themselves into Provincial Congress Committees.

(c) The Secretaries of the Convention Committees shall take steps to form separate Provincial Congress Committees for Central Provinces, Bihar and Burma.

Article VII

Every Provincial Congress Committee so formed will add to its number:

(a) Representatives elected in accordance with its terms of affiliation by every affiliated District Congress Committee or Association referred to in clause (c) of Article IV.

(b) As many representatives of recognised Political Associations or Public Bodies referred to in clause (e) of Article IV as each Provincial Congress Committee may think fit to determine.

(c) Such other persons in the Province as may have attended as many sessions of the Congress as delegates as may be determined by each Provincial Congress Committee for its own Province.

(d) All such ex-Presidents of the Congress or ex-Chairmen of Reception Committees of the Congress as ordinarily reside within the jurisdiction of the Provincial Congress

Committee and may not have been enrolled as members of the said Committee in accordance with clause (b) of Article VI or by virtue of the provisions contained in any of the foregoing clauses of this Article.

- (e) The Joint Secretary or Secretaries of the Congress ordinarily residing within the jurisdiction of the Provincial Congress Committee, such Joint Secretary or Secretaries being added as ex-officio member or members of the said Committee.

Article VIII

Every member of the Provincial Congress Committee shall pay an annual subscription of not less than Rs. 5.

District or other Congress Committees or Associations

Article IX

The Provincial Congress Committee shall have affiliated to itself a District Congress Committee or Association for each District, wherever possible, or for such other areas in the Province as it deems proper, subject to such conditions or terms of affiliation as it may deem expedient or necessary. It will be the duty of the District Congress Committee or Association to act for the District in Congress matters with the co-operation of any Sub-divisional or Taluka Congress Committees which may be organised and affiliated to it, subject in all cases to the general control and approval of the Provincial Congress Committee.

Article X

Every member of the District Congress Committee or Association shall either be a resident of the District or shall have a substantial interest in the District and shall pay an annual subscription of not less than one Rupee.

Article XI

No District Congress Committee or Association or Public Body referred to in clauses (c) and (e) of Article IV shall be entitled to return representatives to the Provincial Congress Committee or Delegates to the Congress or to the Provincial Conference un-

less it contributes to the Provincial Congress Committee such annual subscription as may be determined by the latter.

Article XII

Each Provincial Congress Committee shall frame its own Rules not inconsistent with the Constitution and Rules of the Congress. No District or other Congress Committee or Association mentioned in Article IX shall frame any Rules inconsistent with those framed by the Provincial Congress Committee to which it is affiliated.

The All-India Congress Committee

Article XIII

The All-India Congress Committee shall, as far as possible, be constituted as herein below laid down:

15	Representatives of Madras;
15	„ Bombay;
20	„ United Bengal;
15	„ United Provinces;
13	„ Punjab (including N.W. Frontier Province);
7	„ Central Provinces;
5	„ Bihar;
5	„ Berar;
and 2	„ Burma;

Provided as far as possible that one-fifth of the total number of representatives shall be Mahomedans.

All ex-Presidents of the Congress, residing or present in India and the General Secretaries of the Congress, who shall also be ex-officio General Secretaries of the All-India Congress Committee shall be ex-officio members in addition.

Article XIV

The representatives of each Province shall be elected by its Provincial Congress Committee at a meeting held, as far as possible, before the 30th of November for each year. If any Provin-

cial Congress Committee fails to elect its representatives, the said representatives shall be elected by the Delegates for that Province present at the ensuing Congress. In either case the representatives of each Province shall be elected from among the members of its Provincial Congress Committee, and the election shall be made, as far as possible, with due regard to the provision in Article XIII.

Article XV

The names of the representatives so elected by the different Provinces shall be communicated to the General Secretaries. These together with the names of the ex-officio members shall be announced at the Congress.

Article XVI

The President of the Congress at which the All-India Congress Committee comes into existence shall, if he ordinarily resides in India, be ex-officio President of the All-India Congress Committee. In his absence the members of the All-India Congress Committee may elect their own President.

Article XVII

(a) The All-India Congress Committee so constituted shall hold office from the dissolution of the Congress at which it comes into existence till the dissolution of the following Congress.

(b) If any vacancy arises by death, resignation or otherwise, the remaining members of the Province in respect of which the vacancy has arisen shall be competent to fill it up for the remaining period.

Article XVIII

(a) It will be the duty of the All-India Congress Committee to take such steps as it may deem expedient and practicable to carry on the work and propaganda of the Congress, and it shall have the power to deal with all such matters of great importance or urgency as may require to be disposed of in the name of and for the purpose of the Congress, in addition to matters specified in this Constitution as falling within its powers or functions.

(b) The decision of the All-India Congress Committee shall, in every case above referred to, be final and binding on the Con-

gress and on the Reception Committee or the Provincial Congress Committee, as the case may be, that may be affected by it.

Article XIX

On the requisition in writing of not less than 20 of its members, the General Secretaries shall convene a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at the earliest possible time.

Electorates and Delegates

Article XX

The right of electing Delegates to the Indian National Congress shall vest exclusively in (1) the British Committee of the Congress; (2) Provincial or District or other Congress Committees or Associations formed or affiliated as hereinabove laid down and (3) such Political Associations or Public Bodies of more than three years' standing as may be recognised in that behalf by the Provincial Congress Committee of the Province to which the Political Association or Public Body belongs, provided that no such Political Association or Public Body shall be so recognised unless the said Political Association or Public Body, by a Resolution at a General Meeting of its members, expresses its acceptance of the principles embodied in Article I of this Constitution and makes the acceptance of the same a condition precedent to new membership.

Article XXI

All Delegates to the Indian National Congress shall pay a fee of Rs. 20 each and shall be not less than twenty-one years at the date of election.

Reception Committee of the Congress

Article XXII

(a) The Provincial Congress Committee of the Province in which the Congress is to be held shall take steps to form a Reception Committee for the Congress. Everyone, who ordinarily resides in the Province, fulfils the conditions laid down in Article V of this Constitution and pays a minimum contribution of Rs. 25 shall be eligible as a member of the Reception Committee.

(b) No one who is only a member of the Reception Committee, but not a Delegate, shall be allowed to vote or take part in the debate at the Congress.

(c) The Reception Committee shall be bound to provide the necessary funds for meeting all the expenses of the Congress as also the cost of preparing, printing, publishing and distributing the Report of the Congress.

Election of the President

Article XXIII

(a) In the month of June, the Reception Committee shall consult the several Provincial Congress Committees as to the selection of the President for the year's Congress. The Provincial Congress Committees shall make their recommendations by the end of July; and in the month of August the Reception Committee shall meet to consider the recommendations. If a person be recommended by a majority of the members of the Reception Committee present at a special meeting called for the purpose, that person shall be the President of the next Congress. If, however, the Reception Committee is unable to elect the President in the manner mentioned above, the matter shall forthwith be referred by it to the All-India Congress Committee whose decision shall be arrived at, as far as possible, before the end of September. In either case, the election shall be final:

Provided that in no case shall the person so elected President, belong to the Province in which the Congress is to be held.

(b) There shall be no formal election of the President by or in the Congress, but merely the adoption (in accordance with the provisions in that behalf laid down in Rule 3, clause (b) of the "Rules" hereto appended) of a formal Resolution requesting the President, already elected in the manner hereinabove laid down, to take the chair.

Subjects Committee

Article XXIV

The Subjects Committee to be appointed at each session of the

Congress to settle its programme of business to be transacted shall, as far as possible, consist of:

not more than	15	representatives of	Madras
"	"	"	15
"	"	"	"
"	"	"	20
"	"	"	"
"	"	"	15
"	"	"	"
"	"	"	13
"	"	"	"
"	"	"	7
"	"	"	"
"	"	"	5
"	"	"	"
"	"	"	5
"	"	"	"
"	"	"	2
"	"	"	"
"	"	"	5
"	"	"	"
			British Committee of the Congress

and additional 10 representatives of the Province in which the Congress is held.

All the abovementioned representatives being elected, in accordance with Rule 9 of the "Rules" hereto appended, by the Delegates attending the Congress from the respective Provinces.

The President of the Congress for the year, the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the year, all ex-Presidents and ex-Chairmen of Reception Committees, the General Secretaries of the Congress, the local Secretaries of the Congress for the year, not exceeding six in number, and all the members of the All-India Congress Committee for the year, shall, in addition be ex-officio members of the Subjects Committee.

Article XXV

The President of the Congress for the year shall be ex-officio Chairman of the Subjects Committee.

Contentious Subjects and Interest of Minorities

Article XXVI

(a) No subject shall be passed for discussion by the Subjects Committee or allowed to be discussed at any Congress by the President thereof, to the introduction of which the Hindu or Ma-

homedan Delegates, as a body, object by a majority of three-fourths of their number; and if, after the discussion, it shall appear that the Hindu or Mahomedan Delegates, as a body, are, by a majority of three-fourths of their number, opposed to the Resolution which it is proposed to pass thereon, such Resolution shall be dropped.

(b) The President of the Congress for the year may nominate five delegates to the Subjects Committee to represent minorities or to make up such deficiencies as he may think necessary.

(c) In any representations which the Congress may make or in any demands which it may put forward for the larger association of the people of India with the administration of the country, the interest of minorities shall be duly safeguarded.

Voting at the Congress

Article XXVII

Ordinarily, all questions shall be decided by a majority of votes as laid down in Rule 21 of the "Rules" hereto appended but in cases falling under Article XXX of this Constitution or whenever a division is duly asked for in accordance with Rule 22 of the "Rules" hereto appended, the voting at the Congress shall be by Provinces only. In cases falling under clause (1) of Article XXX, each Province shall have one vote, to be given as determined by a majority of its Delegates present at the Congress. In all other cases of voting by Provinces, the vote of each Province, determined as aforesaid, shall be equivalent to the number of representatives assigned to the Province in constituting the All-India Congress Committee.

The British Committee of the Congress

Article XXVIII

The Reception Committee of the Province in which the Congress is held shall remit to the British Committee of the Congress, through the General Secretaries of the Congress, half the amount of the fees received by it from Delegates.

*General Secretaries**Article XXIX*

(a) The Indian National Congress shall have two General Secretaries who shall be annually elected by the Congress. They shall be responsible for the preparation, publication and distribution of the Report of the Congress. They shall also be responsible for the preparation and circulation of Draft Resolutions of the Congress, which they must send to the Provincial Congress Committees at the latest in the first week of December.

(b) The All-India Congress Committee shall make adequate provision for the expenses of the work devolving on the General Secretaries, either out of the surplus at the disposal of the Reception Committee or by calling upon the Provincial Congress Committee to make such contributions as it may deem fit to apportion among them.

*Changes in the Constitution or Rules**Article XXX*

No addition, alteration or amendment shall be made (1) in Article I of this Constitution except by a unanimous vote of all the Provinces, and (2) in the rest of this Constitution or in the "Rules" hereto appended except by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the votes of the Provinces, provided, in either case, that no motion for any such addition, alteration or amendment shall be brought before the Congress unless it has been previously accepted by the Subjects Committee of the Congress for the year.

*Transitory Provisions**Article XXXI*

(a) The Committee appointed by the Convention at Surat on 28th December, 1907, for drawing up a Constitution for the Congress shall exercise all the powers of the All-India Congress Committee till the formation of the latter at the next session of the Congress.

(b) The Secretaries of the said Convention Committee shall

discharge the duties of the General Secretaries of the Congress till the dissolution of the next session of the Congress.

(c) The President and Secretaries of the Convention Committee should, in consultation with the Secretaries of the several Provincial Sub-Committees, arrange for the holding of a Session of the Congress during Christmas next in accordance with this Constitution.

(d) For the year 1908, the Reception Committee may, in electing the President, consult the Provincial Congress Committees in the beginning of October, before the end of which month, the Provincial Congress Committees, on being so consulted, shall make their recommendations, and the rest of the procedure prescribed in Article XXIII should be followed and completed as far as possible before the end of November.

RULES FOR THE CONDUCT AND REGULATION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS MEETINGS

(Adopted at the meeting of the Convention Committee held
at Allahabad on the 18th and 19th of April 1908)

(1) The Indian National Congress shall ordinarily hold an Annual Session at such place as may have been decided upon in accordance with Article III of the Constitution and on such days during Christmas week as may be fixed by the Reception Committee. An extraordinary session of the Congress shall be held at such town and on such days as the All-India Congress Committee may determine.

(2) Each Congress session shall open with a meeting of the Delegates at such time and place as may be notified by the Reception Committee. The time and place of subsequent sittings of the session shall be fixed and announced by the President of the Congress.

(3) The proceedings of the opening day and at the first sitting of each Congress session shall, as far as possible, consist of:

(a) The Chairman of the Reception Committee's inaugural address of welcome to the delegates.

(b) The adoption of a formal Resolution to be moved, second-

ed and supported by such Delegates as the Chairman of the Reception Committee invites or permits, requesting the President elected by the Reception Committee or the All-India Congress Committee, as the case may be, to take the chair, no opposition by way of a motion for amendment, adjournment or otherwise being allowed to postpone or prevent the carrying out of the said Resolution.

- (c) The President's taking the chair and his inaugural address.
 - (d) Reading or distribution of the Report, if any, of the All-India Congress Committee and any statement that the General Secretaries may have to make.
 - (e) Any formal motions of thanks, congratulations, condolences, etc., as the President of the Congress may choose to move from the chair.
 - (f) The adjournment of the Congress for the appointment of the Subjects Committee and the announcement by the President of the time and place of the meetings of the Delegates of the different Provinces for the election of the members of the Subjects Committee, and also of the first meeting of the Subjects Committee.
- (4) No other business or motions in any form shall be allowed at the opening sitting of the Congress session.
- (5) The Chairman of the Reception Committee shall preside over the assembly at the first sitting until the President takes the chair. The President of the Congress shall preside at all sittings of the Congress session as well as at all meetings of the Subjects Committee. In case of his absence and during such absence, any ex-President of the Congress present, who may be nominated by the President, and in case no ex-President is available, the Chairman of the Reception Committee shall preside at the Congress sitting; provided that the Subjects Committee may in such cases choose its own Chairman.
- (6) The President or the Chairman shall have, at all votings, one vote in his individual capacity and also a casting vote in case of equality of votes.
- (7) The President or Chairman shall decide all points of order

and procedure summarily and his decision shall be final and binding.

(8) The President or Chairman shall have the power, in cases of grave disorder or for any other legitimate reason, to adjourn the Congress either to a definite time or *sine die*.

(9) The election of the members of the Subjects Committee shall take place at meetings of the Delegates of different Provinces held at such place and time as may be announced by the President. Each such meeting in case of contest, shall have a Chairman who will first receive nominations, each nomination being made by at least five delegates, and then after announcing all the nominations he may ask each Delegate to give in a list of members he votes for, and he may put the nominated names to the vote in such order as he pleases, or if there are only two rival lists, he shall take votes on these lists and announce the result of the election and forthwith communicate the same to the General Secretaries of the Congress.

(10) The Subjects Committee shall deliberate upon and prepare the agenda paper for the business to be transacted at the next Congress sitting. The General Secretaries shall, as far as practicable, distribute among the Delegates a printed copy of the agenda paper for each sitting before the sitting commences.

(11) At each sitting of the Congress, the order in which business shall be transacted shall be as follows:

(a) The resolutions recommended for adoption by the Subjects Committee.

(b) Any substantive motion not included in (a) which does not fall under Article XXX of the Constitution and which 25 Delegates request the President in writing, before the commencement of the day's sitting, to be allowed to place before the Congress; provided, however, that no such motion shall be allowed unless it has been previously discussed at a meeting of the Subjects Committee and has received the support of at least a third of the members then present.

(12) Nothing in the foregoing rule shall prevent the President from changing the order of the Resolutions mentioned in Rule

11(a) or from himself moving from the chair formal motions of thanks, congratulations, condolences or the like.

(13) The proposers, seconders, and supporters of the Resolution recommended for adopting by the Subjects Committee shall be Delegates and shall be selected by the said Committee. The President may allow other Delegates to speak on the Resolutions at his discretion and may allow any distinguished visitor to address the Congress. Nothing in the foregoing, however, shall prevent the President from moving from the chair such Resolutions as he may be authorised to do by the Subjects Committee.

(14) An amendment may be moved to any motion provided that the same is relevant to the question at issue, that it does not raise a question already decided or anticipate any question embraced in a resolution on the agenda paper for the day and that it is couched in proper language and is not antagonistic to the fundamental principles of the Congress. Every amendment must be in the form of a proposition complete in itself.

(15) When amendments are moved to a motion, they shall be put to the vote in the reverse order to that in which they have been moved.

(16) A motion for an adjournment of the debate on a proposition may be made at any time and so also, with the consent of the President or Chairman's motion for the adjournment of the House. The President or Chairman shall have the power to decline to put to vote any motion for adjournment if he considers it to be vexatious or obstructive or an abuse of the rules and regulations.

(17) All motions, substantive or by way of amendment, adjournment, etc., shall have to be seconded, failing which they shall fail. No motions whether those coming under Rule 11(b) or for amendment, adjournment, closure, etc., shall be allowed to be moved unless timely intimation thereof is sent to the President with the motion clearly stated in writing over the signatures of the proposer and seconder with the name of the Province from which they have been elected as Delegates.

(18) No one who has taken part in the debate in the Congress on a resolution, shall be allowed to move or second a motion for adjournment or amendment in the course of the debate on that Resolution. If a motion for adjournment of the debate on any

proposition is carried, the debate on the said proposition shall then cease and may be resumed only after the business on the agenda paper for the day is finished. A motion for adjournment of the House shall state definitely the time when the House is to resume business.

(19) A motion for a closure of the debate on a proposition may be moved at any time after the lapse of half-an-hour from the time the proposition was moved; and if such motion for closure is carried, all discussion upon the original proposition or amendments proposed to it, shall at once stop and the President shall proceed to take votes.

(20) No motion for a closure of the debate shall be moved whilst a speaker is duly in possession of the House.

(21) All questions shall be decided by a majority of votes, subject, however, to the provisions of Articles XXVII and XXX of the Constitution. Votes shall ordinarily be taken by a show of hands or by the Delegates for or against standing up in their places in turn to have the numbers counted.

(22) In cases not falling under Article XXX of the Constitution, any twenty members of a Congress sitting may demand a division within five minutes of the declaration of the result of the voting by the President and such division shall be granted. Thereupon the Delegates of each Province shall meet at such time and place as the President may direct and the Chairman of each such meeting shall notify to the President the vote of the Province within the time specified by the President.

(23) Every member of a sitting of the Congress or of the Subjects Committee shall be bound (a) to occupy a seat in the block allotted to his province, save as provided for in Rule 30, (b) to maintain silence when the President rises to speak or when another member is in possession of the House, (c) to refrain from hisses or interruptions of any kind or indulgence in improper and unparliamentary language, (d) to obey the Chair, (e) to withdraw when his own conduct is under debate, after he has heard the charge and been heard thereon, and (f) generally to conduct himself with propriety and decorum.

(24) No member shall have the right at a Congress sitting to speak more than once on any motion except for a personal explanation or for raising a point of order. But the mover of a subs-

tantive motion (not one for amendment or adjournment) shall have the right of reply. A person who has taken part in a debate may speak upon an amendment or motion for adjournment moved after he had spoken. The President or Chairman shall have the right to fix a time-limit upon all speakers, as also to call or order or stop any speaker from further continuing his speech even before the time-limit expires, if he is guilty of tedious repetitions, improper expressions, irrelevant remarks, etc. and persists in them in spite of the warning from the President.

(25) If a person does not obey the President's or the Chairman's orders or if he is guilty of disorderly conduct, the President shall have the right, with a warning in the first instance, and without a warning in case of contumacious disregard of his authority, to ask such member to leave the precincts of the House, and on such requisition, the member so ordered shall be bound to withdraw and shall be suspended from his functions as a member during the day's sitting.

(26) If the President considers that the punishment he can inflict according to the foregoing section is not sufficient, he may, in addition to it, ask the House to award such punishment as the House deems proper. The Congress shall have the power in such cases of expelling the member from the entire Congress session.

(27) The Reception Committee shall organise a body of such persons as it may deem fit for the purpose of keeping order during the meeting of the Congress or of its Subjects Committee or at divisions. There shall be a Captain at the head of this body and he shall carry out the orders of the President or the Chairman.

(28) Visitors may be allowed at the sitting of the Congress on such terms and conditions as the Reception Committee determines. They may, at any time, be asked to withdraw by the President. They shall be liable to be summarily ejected from the House if they enter the area marked out for the delegates, or if they disobey the Chair, or if they are guilty of disturbance or obstruction, or if they are in anywise disorderly in their behaviour.

(29) The meetings of the Subjects Committee shall be open only to the members of that Committee and the meetings of the

Delegates of each Province at divisions shall be open to the Delegates of that Province only, subject in either case to the Provisions of Rule 27.

(30) The Chairman of the Reception Committee and the President, as well as the Secretaries may, at their discretion, accommodate on the Presidential platform, (1) Leading members of the Congress, (2) Distinguished visitors, (3) Members of the Reception Committee and (4) Ladies, whether Delegates or visitors.

(31) The foregoing Rules shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the Provincial or District Conferences organised by the Provincial Congress Committees as provided for in Article VI of the Constitution.

CONSTITUTION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS—1920

Object

Article I

The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of Swarajya by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means.

Session of the Congress

Article II

(a) The Indian National Congress shall ordinarily meet once every year during Christmas holidays at such place as may have been decided upon at its previous session, or such other place as may have been determined by the All-India Congress Committee hereinafter referred to.

(b) An extraordinary session of the Congress may be summoned by the All-India Congress Committee either on its own motion or on the requisition of a majority of the Provincial Congress Committees, wherever it may deem it advisable to hold such a session; and the Articles of this Constitution shall apply with such modifications as the All-India Congress Committee may consider necessary in respect of each such session.

*Component Parts of the Congress**Article III*

The Indian National Congress organisation shall consist of the following:

- (a) The Indian National Congress.
- (b) Provincial Congress Committees.
- (c) District Congress Committees.
- (d) Sub-divisional, Taluqa or Tahsil, Firka or other local Congress Committees.
- (e) The All-India Congress Committee.
- (f) Such other committees outside India as may from time to time be recognised by the Congress in this behalf.
- (g) Bodies formed or organised periodically by the Provincial, District, Taluqa or Tahsil, or other Local Congress such as the Reception Committee of the Congress and the Provincial, District, Taluqa or Tahsil or other local Conferences.

*Membership**Article IV*

No person shall be eligible to be a member of any of the organisations referred to in the foregoing Article, unless he or she has obtained the age of 21 and expresses in writing his or her acceptance of the object and the methods as laid down in Article I of this Constitution and of the Rules of the Congress.

*Provincial Congress Committees**Article V*

The following shall be the provinces with headquarters mentioned against them, and where no headquarters are mentioned, and in every case, the respective Provincial Congress Committees shall have the power to fix or alter them from time to time.

<i>Provinces</i>	<i>Headquarters</i>
(1) Madras (Tamil)	Madras
(2) Andhra (Telugu)	
(3) Karnatak (Kannada)	Gadag
(4) Kerala (Malayalam)	Calicut
(5) City of Bombay (Marathi & Gujarati)	Bombay
(6) Maharashtra (Marathi)	Poona
(7) Gujarat (Gujarati)	Ahmedabad
(8) Sindh (Sindhi)	
(9) United Provinces (Hindustani)	Allahabad
(10) Punjab (Punjabi)	Lahore
(11) N.W. Frontier Province (Hindustani)	Peshawar
(12) Delhi (Hindustani)	Delhi
(13) Ajmer-Merwara and Rajputana (Hindustani)	Ajmer
(14) Central Provinces (Hindustani)	Jubbulpore
(15) Central Provinces (Marathi)	Nagpur
(16) Berar (Marathi)	Amraoti
(17) Bihar (Hindustani)	Patna
(18) Utkal (Orissa) (Oriya)	
(19) Bengal and Surma Valley (Bengali)	Calcutta
(20) Assam (Assamese)	Gauhati
(21) Burma (Burmese)	Rangoon

Provided that the All-India Congress Committee may from time to time assign particular Indian States to particular provinces, and a Provincial Congress Committee may in its turn allot particular Indian States, assigned to it by the All-India Congress Committee, to particular districts within its jurisdiction.

The existing Provincial Congress Committees shall forthwith proceed to reorganise themselves in terms of this Constitution and such reorganisation shall be final unless and until it is revised by the All-India Congress Committee.

*Provincial Organisations**Article VI*

(a) There shall be a Provincial Congress Committee for each of the provinces named in the foregoing Article.

(b) Each Provincial Congress Committee shall organise District and other Committees referred to in Article III, and shall have the power to frame rules laying down conditions of membership and for the conduct of business not inconsistent with this Constitution or any Rules made by the All India Congress Committee.

(c) Each Provincial Congress Committee shall consist of representatives elected annually by the members of the District and other Committees in accordance with the Rules made by the Provincial Congress Committee.

*Franchise**Article VII*

Every person not disqualified under Article IV and paying a subscription of 4 annas per year, shall be entitled to become a member of any organisation controlled by the Provincial Congress Committee.

*Electorate and Delegates**Article VIII*

Each Provincial Congress Committee shall be responsible for the election of Delegates to the Congress.

No one shall be qualified for election who is not of the age of 21 years, and who does not subscribe to the Congress creed.

The number of Delegates shall be not more than one for every 50 thousand or its fraction of the inhabitants of the province of its jurisdiction including the Indian States therein, in accordance with the last census; provided, however, that the inclusion of Indian States in the electorate shall not be taken to include any interference by the Congress with the internal affairs of such States.

Each Provincial Congress Committee shall frame Rules for

the election of Delegates, due regard being had to the return of women Delegates and representation of minorities, special interests or classes needing special protection.

The Rules shall provide for the organization of electorates and shall prescribe the procedure to be adopted for securing the proportional representation (by a single transferable vote) of every variety of political opinion.

The Rules framed by each Provincial Congress Committee shall be sent to the General Secretaries of the Congress not later than the 30th April 1921, which Rules shall be published for general information by the Secretaries as soon as possible after the receipt thereof.

Each Provincial Congress Committee shall send to the Reception Committee of the ensuing session of the Congress an alphabetical list of the delegates so elected containing the full name, occupation, age, sex, religion and address of each of them to reach the Committee not later than the 15th day of December every year and, in the case of an extraordinary session, not later than ten days before the date advertised for the holding of such session.

Article IX

(a) Each Provincial Congress Committee shall pay annually such subscription to the All-India Congress Committee as may be fixed by the latter from time to time.

(b) No member of a Congress Committee shall vote at the election of representatives or Delegates, or be elected as such, unless and until he has paid the subscription due from him.

Delegation

Article X

Each Committee referred to in Article VIII shall issue certificates to the delegates duly elected in accordance with the form hereto attached (marked Appendix A) and signed by a Secretary of the Committee.

*Delegates' Fee**Article XI*

Every Delegate on presenting such a certificate and paying a fee of Rs. 10 at the Congress Office shall receive a ticket entitling him to admission to the Congress.

*Voting at Congress**Article XII*

Delegates shall alone have the power of voting at the Congress sittings or otherwise taking part in its deliberations.

*Reception Committee**Article XIII*

The Reception Committee shall be formed by the Provincial Congress Committee at least six months before the meeting of the annual session and may include persons who are not members of the Provincial Congress Committee. The members of the Reception Committee shall pay not less than Rs. 25 each.

Article XIV

The Reception Committee shall elect its Chairman and other office-bearers from amongst of its own members.

Article XV

It shall be the duty of the Reception Committee to collect funds for the expenses of the Congress Session, to elect the President of the Congress in the manner set forth in the following Article, and to make all necessary arrangements for the reception and accommodation of Delegates and guests and, as far as practicable, of visitors, and for the printing and publication of the report of the proceedings, and to submit statements of receipts and expenditure to the Provincial Congress Committee within 4 months of the session of the Congress.

*Election of the President**Article XVI*

The several Provincial Congress Committees shall, as far as

possible by the end of June, suggest to the Reception Committee the names of persons who are in their opinion eligible for the Presidentship of the Congress, and the Reception Committee shall, as far as possible, in the first week of July, submit to all the Provincial Committees the names as suggested for their final recommendations, provided that such final recommendation will be of any one but not more, of such names; and the Reception Committee shall, as far as possible, meet in the month of August to consider such recommendations. If the person recommended by a majority of the Provincial Congress Committees is adopted by a majority of the members of the Reception Committee present at a special meeting, called for the purpose, that person shall be the President of the next Congress. If, however, the Reception Committee is unable to accept the President recommended by the Provincial Congress Committees or in case of emergency by resignation, death or otherwise of the President elected in this manner, the matter shall forthwith be referred by it to the All-India Congress Committee whose decision shall be arrived at, as far as possible, before the end of September. In either case the election shall be final, provided that in no case shall the person so elected as President belong to the Province in which the Congress is to be held.

The President of a special or extraordinary session shall be elected by the All-India Congress Committee subject to the same proviso.

Congress Funds

Article XVII

(a) The Reception Committee shall, through the Provincial Congress Committee of the province, remit to the All-India Congress Committee, not later than two weeks after the termination of the Congress session, ordinary or extraordinary, half the delegation fees.

(b) If the Reception Committee has a balance after defraying all the expenses of the session, it shall hand over the same to the Provincial Congress Committee in the province in which the session was held towards the Provincial Congress fund of that province.

*Audit**Article XVIII*

The receipts and expenditure of the Reception Committee shall be audited by an auditor or auditors appointed by the Provincial Congress Committee concerned, and the statement of accounts together with the auditor's report shall be sent by the Provincial Congress Committee not later than six months from the termination of the Congress to the All-India Congress Committee.

*All-India Congress Committee**Article XIX*

The All-India Congress Committee shall consist of 350 members exclusive of ex-officio members. The ex-officio members shall be past Presidents of the Congress and General Secretaries and Treasurers of the Congress.

Each Provincial Congress Committee shall elect the allotted number of members of the All-India Congress Committee from among the members of the Congress Committees within its jurisdiction.

The allotment shall be on the basis of population according to linguistic re-distribution of provinces, or in such other manner as may appear more equitable to the All-India Congress Committee, and shall be published by the All-India Congress Committee before the 31st day of January 1921.

The method of election shall be the same as already prescribed for the election of delegates.

Election to the All-India Congress Committee shall ordinarily take place in the month of November.

The first All-India Congress Committee under this Constitution shall be elected on or before the 30th of June 1921. Till then, the members of the All-India Congress Committee recently elected shall continue in office.

The All-India Congress Committee shall meet as often as may be necessary for the discharge of its obligations and every time upon requisition by 15 members thereof who shall state in their requisition the definite purpose for which they desire a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee.

The All-India Congress Committee shall hold office till election of the new All-India Congress Committee.

Article XX

The Secretaries of the respective Provincial Congress Committees shall issue certificates of membership of the All-India Committee to the person so elected.

Function of A.I.C.C.

Article XXI

The All-India Congress Committee shall be the Committee of the Congress to carry out the programme of work laid down by the Congress from year to year, and deal with all new matters that may arise during the year and may not be provided for by the Congress itself. For this purpose, the All-India Congress Committee shall have the power to frame its own rules not inconsistent with this Constitution.

Article XXII

The President of the Congress shall be the Chairman of the All-India Congress Committee for the year following.

General Secretaries

Article XXIII

The Indian National Congress shall have three General Secretaries who shall be annually elected by the Congress. They shall prepare the report of the work of the All-India Congress Committee during the year and submit it, with a full account of the funds, which may come into their hands, to the All-India Congress Committee at a meeting to be held at the place and about the time of the session of the Congress for the year; and copies of such account and report shall then be presented to the Congress and sent to the Congress Committee.

Article XXIV

The All-India Congress Committee shall at its first meeting appoint a Working Committee consisting of the President, the Gene-

ral Secretaries, the Treasurers and 9 other members, which shall perform such functions as may be delegated to it from time to time by the All-India Congress Committee.

Subjects Committee

Article XXV

The members of the All-India Congress Committee shall constitute the Subjects Committee for the ordinary or extraordinary session following.

Article XXVI

The Subjects Committee shall meet at least two days before the meeting of the Congress in open session. At this meeting, the President-elect shall preside and the outgoing Secretaries shall submit the draft programme of the work for the ensuing sessions of the Congress, including resolutions recommended by the different Provincial Congress Committees for adoption.

Article XXVII

The Subjects Committee shall proceed to discuss the said programme and shall frame resolutions to be submitted to the open session.

Article XXVIII

The Subjects Committee shall also meet from time to time as the occasion may require during the pendency of the Congress session.

Contentious Subjects and Interests of Minorities

Article XXIX

No subject shall be passed for discussion by the Subjects Committee or allowed to be discussed at any Congress by the President thereof, to the introduction of which the Hindu or Mahomedan delegates, as a body, object by a majority of three-fourths of their number, and if, after the discussion of any subject which has been admitted for discussion, it shall appear that the Hindu or Mahomedan delegates, as a body, are, by a majority of three-fourths

of their number, opposed to the resolution which it is proposed to pass thereon, such resolution shall be dropped.

Article XXX

The All-India Congress Committee shall have the power to frame rules in respect of all matters not covered by the Constitution and not inconsistent with its Articles.

Article XXXI

The Articles and the Creed of the Constitution now in force are hereby repealed without prejudice to all acts done thereunder.

(Resolution XVIII, 26th-31st December 1920;

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GLOSSARY

- Baboo**—Mr. in Bengal, among Bengalis expresses friendship or respect. Englishmen in India used the term to express their contempt of English-educated Bengalis.
- Badmasha**—ruffian.
- Banya**—a Caste of traders, shopkeepers, or moneylenders.
- Durga Puja**—religious ceremony to goddess Durga.
- Feringhi**—a term expressing contempt of Englishmen, or foreigners.
- Ghadar**—revolutionary movement.
- Guru**—spiritual teacher.
- Hartal**—strike observed with prayers and fast.
- Kafir**—unbeliever in Islam, a term expressing contempt of non-Muslims.
- Karma**—correct deeds in accordance with one's caste, performed to safeguard one's present and future condition.
- Ki-Jai**—long live.
- Kulin**—a high sub-caste of Bengali Brahmins.
- Lathi**—a long stick with iron head.
- Maidan**—a Park.
- Mantra**—religious verse.
- Marwari**—a trader or moneylender originally from Marwar.
- Mofussil**—countryside.
- Panchayat**—village council.
- Ryot(s)**—Peasant(s)
- Satyagraha**—'non-violent resistance', lit. adherence to Truth.
- Shikari**—helper in the hunt.
- Swadeshi**—local goods, made in one's own country.
- Swaraj**—self-rule, independence.
- Tamasha**—a show, entertainment.
- Vakil**—a pleader.
- Zamindar(s)**—landlord(s).

INDEX

- Agnihotri, Shiva Narain, 60
 Akbar, 149, 166
 All-India Conference, 135
 All-India Moderates' Conference, 161
 All-India Trade Union Congress, 172
 Amir of Afghanistan, 156
 Anglo-Indian and European Defence Association, 10, 15
 Anglo-Indians or Englishmen, 1n, 7, 8, 11, 12, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, 34, 36, 38, 44, 55, 58, 80, 88, 95, 96, 107, 124, 128, 129, 130, 139, 140, 164
 Anti-partition agitation, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 115, 116, 118, 131
 Arya Samaj, 60, 61, 63, 64, 65, 68, 69, 85, 88, 108, 110, 129, 130, 145, 146, 147, 148
 Asoka, 166
 Aston, 75
 Athalye, 127
 Aurangzeb, 149
 Ayerst, C. E., 74
- Baker, Sir Edward, 151
 Banerjea, Surendranath, early life and education, 1-2; expelled from I.C.S., 2-3; stirring political agitation, 3-4, 26, 170-171; establishes Indian Association, 4; proprietor and editor of *Bengalee*, 5; Contempt Case, imprisonment, and Ilbert Bill, 6-7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18n, 28, 116; activity in Indian Association, 17, 30, 34; role in National Fund, 15, 16, 17, 23, 26, 27; role in National Conference, 17, 27, 30; association with Brahmo Samaj, 13, 28, 64-65, 67; joins Congress, 32; on self-government, 23-24, 33-34, 42, 44, 138, 148, 171; on Britain's Providential Mission, 21-22, 24, 25, 26, 32, 40, 43, 57, 67; on constitutional agitation, 22-23, 27, 53, 79, 94, 120, 138, 151; on Proclamation of Queen Victoria, 33, 43, 56, 93; loyalty to British rule, 40-41, 42, 53, 54, 56, 57, 58, 69, 79, 97, 150, 154, 155; appeals to Englishmen in India, 36, 54, 58; advocates Indian agitation in England, 38, 45, 48, 52, 56, 57, 149; Delegate of Congress to England, 43-45, 77-78; appeals to Liberal Party in England, 44, 50, 149; attitude to Muslims, 35, 67, 72, 171; attacked by vernacular press, 46, 49, 73n, 151-152, 169; elected representative of Calcutta Municipal Corporation and nominated to Bengal Legislative Council, 51, 57; President of 1895 Congress, 57, 72; Secretary of Indian Press Association, 74-76; Member of Committee to draft constitution of Congress, 81, 106; Member of Indian Congress Committee, 84; Member of Congress Educational Committee, 86; in leadership of moderates, 81, 84; 85, 87, 102, 119, 120, 159, 170; President of 1902 Congress, 92-93; advocates Swadeshi, 93, 110, 111, 115; resigns from Calcutta Municipal Corporation, 98; protests against racial discrimination of Indians, 2, 105; courts arrest in Barisal, 116, 169; role in agitation against partition of Bengal, 115, 116, 117; role in

- Surat split, 133-134; Chairman of All-India Conference (1907), 135; at Imperial Press Conference, 148, 150; elected to Bengal Legislative Council and to Imperial Legislative Council (1913), 151; leaves Congress and elected President of All-India Moderates' Conference (1918), 161-162; declines invitation of Lajpat Rai to attend 1920 special Calcutta Congress, 167; knighted and appointed Minister of Local Self-Government (1921), 168; denounced by Nationalists, 169-170; death (1925), 172
- Banerjee, Kali Charan, 92
- Bannerjee, Tarapada, 15
- Barkatullah, 156
- Basu, Bhupendranath, 119, 142, 153, 154
- Beams, John, 9
- Beck, Theodore, 36, 37, 41
- Besant, Annie, 154, 159, 160, 162
- Blake, E., 54
- Blunt, Wilfrid, 95
- Bonnerji, W. C., 6, 7, 11, 30, 31, 32, 39, 43, 50, 81, 84, 87, 89, 90, 99, 102, 161
- Bose, Ananda Mohan, 17, 65, 80, 84, 95, 110
- Boycott, 73, 109, 110, 112, 113, 114, 115, 120, 121, 122, 123, 132, 133, 134, 135, 142, 152, 167
- Bradlaugh, Charles, 42, 46, 47
- Brahmo Samaj, 13, 60, 61, 64, 65, 66, 68, 69
- British Committee of the Indian National Congress, 39, 42, 43, 45, 46, 49, 52, 57, 102, 106, 107, 162
- British Indian Association, 5, 21, 30
- Canning, Lord, 139
- Central Mohamedan Association, 30
- Chaitanya, 166
- Chakravarti, Chandra, 156, 157
- Chakravarti, Shyam Sunder, 141
- Chand, Hukam, 46
- Chandavarkar, Narayan, 84
- Chapekar, Damodar, 74, 75
- Charlu, Ananda, 48, 81, 84, 87
- Chatterjee, Bankim Chandra, 114
- Chatterjee, Satish Chandra, 115, 141
- Chelmsford, Lord, 160
- Chintamani, C. Y., 162
- Choudhary, Rahmat Ali, 175
- Colonization Bill, 127, 128, 129
- Congress, 5, 23, 27, 28, 30-58, 61-64, 69-73, 75-77, 80-93, 95, 97, 99-106, 109-113, 118-126, 131-138, 141-144, 147, 148, 152-154, 158-161, 167, 168, 170, 172, 174
- Congress, Constitution of, 80, 81, 83, 84, 86, 87, 106, 135, 136, 142, 154, 168, Appendix II
- Congress Educational Committee, 86
- Congress Industrial Committee, 86
- Congress Provincial Committee, 83, 84, 92, 161, 167
- Congress Reception Committee, 71, 80, 82, 87, 92, 102, 111, 133, 154
- Congress Standing Committee, 83, 84
- Congress Subjects Committee, 63, 81, 82, 104, 111, 119, 154
- Cotton, Sir Henry, 102, 103, 107
- Crewe, Lord, 150, 151
- Criminal Law Amendment Act, 141
- Curzon, Lord, 95, 96, 98, 100, 103, 104, 108, 109, 111, 118, 149
- Curzon-Wyllie, Sir William, 149
- Das, Bhubon Mohan, 11n
- Das, C. R., 160, 161, 167
- Das, Sain, 63, 110
- Datta, Narendranath, 114
- Caine, W. C., 42
- Calcutta Municipal Bill, 98

- Davitt, Michael, 54
 Delhi Durbar, 150, 151
 Depressed Classes Conference, 147
 Derozio, Henry, 1
 Deshpande, Gangadhar Rao, 117
 Digbi, William, 39, 42, 49, 97
 Dufferin, Lord, 38, 39
 Dutt, Ramesh Chundra, 97
 Dutta, Aswini Kumar, 115, 141

 Edgar, J. Ware, 9
 Elgin, Lord, 79
 Emerson, 116, 169
 Extremists, 63, 64, 69, 71n, 73, 74, 90, 91, 93, 100, 108, 109, 112-115, 118, 119-122, 123-127, 131, 136, 137, 141, 143, 144, 154, 159, 160, 162, 163-164, 167, 168, 177, 178

 Farquhar, J. N., 145
 Frazer, Sir Andrew, 103

 Ganapati, 74
 Ganguli, Dwarkanath, 65
 Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand, 81n, 89, 90, 97, 144n, 153, 154, 159, 160, 163, 165, 167, 168, 172, 173, 177
 Gantz, W., 46
 Garibaldi, 85
 Garth, Sir Richard, 7, 10, 12
 Ghadr Party, 156, 157
 Ghosh, Aurobindo, 114, 115, 118, 119, 121, 123, 124, 126, 131-135, 141, 143, 144
 Ghosh, Lal Mohan, 12, 26, 38, 46, 100, 101, 110
 Ghosh, Man Mohan, 43, 50
 Ghosh, Rash Behari, 132-135, 137
 Gladstone, Herbert, 46
 Gladstone, William E., 20, 22, 24, 44, 50, 55
 Gokhale, Gopal Krishna, 78, 86, 90, 102, 106, 107, 108, 111, 112, 118, 119, 121, 134, 138, 142, 153, 158, 159, 161, 170
 Gossain, Narendra, 155
 Griffin, Sir Lepel, 45
 Gupta, Heramba Lal, 156, 157

 Haque, Fazul, 154
 Hardinge, Lord, 150, 151, 153, 155
 Hare, David, 1
 Harris, Lord, 53
 Harrison, Sir Henry, 95
 Hindu Elementary Education League, 148
 Hindu Mahasabha, 174, 175
 Home Rule League, 159, 160
 Hume, Allan Octavian, 30, 41, 47-50, 55, 63, 81, 87, 99, 100, 102, 136
 Hyndman, Henry, 106, 107

 Ibbetson, Sir Denzil, 127n, 129
 Ilbert Bill, 7-12, 14, 16, 18, 20-22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 36, 38, 55, 116, 131, 139
 Imperial Press Conference, 148, 150
 Independent Party, 174
 Indian Association, 4, 5, 12, 16, 17, 27, 28, 30, 32, 34, 38, 62, 65, 100
 Indian Civil Service, 2, 4-7, 11, 12, 18, 25-28, 31, 33, 35, 43, 49, 51, 54, 97, 101, 104, 115, 126, 151
 Indian Congress Committee, 83, 84, 86, 87, 89, 90, 110
 Indian Councils Act, 137, 141, 147
 India Home Rule Society, 106
 Indian National Congress, see Congress
 Indian Nationalist Committee at Leipzig, 157
 Indian Nationalist Conference, 132
 Indian Parliamentary Committee, 50, 53, 54, 55

- Indian Press Association, 76, 77
 Iyer, Krishnaswami, 104
 Iyer, Subramanya, 81, 105, 154, 158, 159

 Johnson, H. L., 10
 Joint Select Committee, 162

 Kabir, 166
 Kemp, F. E., 116
 Keswick, 8
 Khan, Afzal, 74
 Khan, Sir Syed Ahmed, 13, 28, 34, 35, 59, 61, 62, 64, 166
 Khilafat Movement, 174
 Kimberly, Lord, 55
 Krishen, M. L. R., 59
 Krishnavarma, Shyamji, 106, 107

 Lal, Har Kishan, 106
 Lal, Munshi Madho, 111
 Landsdowne, Lord, 52
 Lawrence, Henry, 19, 24
 Lytton, Lord, 39

 Macalagan, E., 129
 Macaulay, Thomas Babington, 1, 19, 20, 24
 Maclean, J. M., 45
 Malaviya, Madan Mohan, 33, 81, 86, 105, 106, 112, 119, 120, 121, 167, 174, 177
 Malvi, N., 133
 Mazumdar, Ambica Charan, 82, 104, 106, 152
 Mazumdar, Ram Chandra, 157
 Mazzini, 3, 85
 Mehta, Pherozeshah, 43, 46, 50, 57, 81, 84, 86, 87, 89, 90, 92, 93, 100-102, 105, 106, 119, 120, 133-136, 154, 158, 159, 161, 170
 Minto, Lord, 117, 127n, 129, 132n, 138, 139-141, 144n, 149, 150, 152, 156
 Mitter, Ramesh Chunder, 81
 Moderates, 31, 32, 33, 38, 43, 47, 48, 57-58, 72, 75, 78, 79, 81, 84, 94, 100, 102, 111, 119, 120, 124, 131, 136-138, 141-143, 154, 158, 159, 161, 162, 168, 177, 178
 Moderates Convention, 134, 135
 Mohamed, Syed, 154
 Montague - Chelmsford Reforms, 160, 161, 163, 165-167, 171
 Montague, Edwin, 160
 Morley, John, 117, 118, 127n, 132n, 137n, 138-141, 144n, 148, 149, 150, 156
 Morton, A. C., 57
 Munro, Thomas, 19, 24
 Muslim League, 159
 Mutiny, 8, 19, 36, 53, 80, 118, 129, 139

 Nair, Shankaran, 78, 102, 105, 106
 Naoroji, Dadabhai, 31, 32, 38, 39, 42, 50-52, 55, 70, 87, 97, 99, 102, 119, 161
 Natesan, G. A., 154
 Nath, Dewan Narendra, 14
 Nath, Rai Shiva, 60
 National Conference, 17, 18, 27, 28, 30
 National Fund, 15-18, 22, 23, 26-28
 National Liberal Federation of India, 168
 National Social Conference, 70-72, 88, 89, 91
 Nehru, Jawaharlal, 1, 144n
 Newspaper Act, 140, 153
 Non-Co-operation, 163, 166, 167, 168, 170, 171, 172, 173
 Norris, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12
 Northbrook, Lord, 39
 Norton, E., 42, 82n

 O'Connell, Daniel, 3

 Pal, Bipin Chandra, 3, 30, 114, 115, 118-126, 141, 144, 159

- Pañtulu, Subha Rao**, 80
- Passive Resistance**, 123, 124, 143, 144, 153, 170
- Paul, Herbert**, 55
- Pentland, Lord**, 154
- Pillay, Rathna**, 83
- ...
- Queen Victoria's Proclamation**, 20, 25, 26, 33, 39, 43, 56, 93, 97, 105
- Rai, Jaswant**, 127
- Rai, Lajpat**, early life and education, 59-60; rejects Islamic upbringing and joins Arya Samaj, 60; upholds Hindi in Urdu-Hindi Controversy, 60, 148; "open letters to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan", 61-62, 64; joins Congress, 61; criticism of Congress and of moderates' ideas, 63, 64, 85, 87-88, 91-92, 106, 111-112, 118, 122, 123, 125, 147-148, 154, 163, 164, 166, 172, 173; criticism of Social Conference, 88-89, 91; association with and activity in Arya Samaj, 61, 64, 65, 69, 85, 108, 147; critical attitude to Muslims, 64, 88, 89, 108, 147-148, 166, 174, 175; Member of Industrial Committee and Educational Committee of Congress, 86; Delegate of Congress to England, 105, 106, 107, 108; visits U.S.A., 107, 157; advocates Swadeshi, 85-86, 88, 110, 122, 145; advocates Boycott, 112, 122; attitude to and advocacy of Socialism, 107, 122, 147, 164-166, 172; in leadership of extremists, 119, 121, 124, 159, 163, 167; attitude to Surendranath Banerjea, 3, 164; advocates militancy in 1907 agitation, 128, 129; deportation, 129, 130, 131, 132n, 144n; proposed to presidency of 1907 Congress, 132; mediates between moderates and extremists in Surat split, 134, 167; famine relief, 85, 144-145; elevation of Untouchables, 144, 146, 147; proposed to presidency of 1914 Congress, 154; attitude to 1914 war, 125, 154, 156; attitude to terrorists and to Ghadr movement, 155-158; President of 1920 Calcutta Special Congress, 163, 167; President of the first All-India Trade Union Congress, 172; imprisoned (1922) 173; President of the Hindu Mahasabha of Punjab (1925), 174; Deputy Leader of Swarajist Party, 174; forms with Madan Mohan Malaviya the Independent Party, 174; proposes partition of India, 175; death (1928), 177
- Raj, Hans**, 60, 61, 63, 128, 130
- Raleigh, Thomas**, 98
- Ram, Gurudas**, 130
- Ram, Tohal Ram Ganga**, 110
- Ranade, Mahadev Govind**, 70, 72
- Rand, W. C.**, 74, 75
- Ray, R.**, 112
- Reading, Lord**, 168
- Ripon, Lord**, 7, 10, 11, 18-22, 24-26, 39, 42, 45, 55, 67
- Risley, H.**, 129
- Roberts, Herbert**, 50
- Rowlatt Report**, 74n, 162, 163
- Roy, Bidhan Chandra**, 169
- Roy, J. N.**, 112
- Roy, P. Chandra**, 142
- Roy, Ram Mohan**, 166
- Russel, George**, 55
- ...
- Salisbury, Lord**, 46
- Sankaranarayana, S.**, 142
- Sapru, Tej Bahadur**, 162, 168
- Saraswati, Dayananda**, 60, 68, 69, 166
- Seely, Sir John**, 25, 67

- Self-Government, 23, 24, 28, 33, 99, 107, 108, 118, 119, 124, 125, 135, 138, 142, 148, 151, 158, 159, 166, 170, 171, 172, 173
- Sen, Keshub Chunder, 65, 66, 67, 69
- Sen, Narendranath, 5n, 14, 16, 27, 47, 51, 81
- Shastri, Srinivasa, 162
- Shivaji, 74, 75, 85, 116, 117
- Simon Commission, 177
- Singh, Ajit, 128, 129, 132n
- Singh, Oday Pertab, 37
- Sinha, Satyendra, 106, 158
- Strachey, Sir John, 37
- Swadeshi, 73, 86, 93, 109-113, 115, 118, 120, 122, 123, 133-135, 142, 145, 152
- Swaraj, 73, 118, 119, 124-126, 142-144, 168, 170, 172
- Swarajist Party, 174
- Tagore, Rabindranath, 110
- Tilak, Bal Gangadhar, 71, 74-79, 86, 105, 110-112, 116-121, 124, 132-134, 141, 144, 159, 160, 162
- Treitschke, Heinrich von, 163
- Tyabji, Budrudin, 35, 39, 41, 61
- University Bill, 98, 101
- Upadhyay, Brahma Bandhab, 114, 115, 141
- Vidyarthi, Guru Datta, 60
- Vivekananda, 114
- Volunteer Corps, 40
- Wacha, Dinshaw, 81, 86, 87, 89, 90, 92, 93, 102, 106, 119, 134, 135, 154
- Webb, Alfred, 54, 57, 82n
- Wedderburn, Sir William, 42, 50, 62, 67, 81, 87, 99, 102, 136
- Welby Commission, 77
- Wilson, Sir Alexander, 36
- Yule, George, 41, 62

